

Ann Jay

Gal 10 G. G.

A PRACTICAL
EXPOSITION
UPON THE
Thirty-Nine Articles
OF THE
Church of England.

EXPLAINING
The True and Genuine SENSE of each
ARTICLE and their Foundation
Deriv'd and Confirm'd from SCRIPTURE.

For the Use of Families.

To which is added,
A SERMON upon 1 John V. 7.

By JAMES BOYS, M. A. Vicar of Coggeshall in Essex.

The SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N:

Printed for A. BETTESWORTH, and W. CHURCHILL, in *Pater-Noster-Row*:
J. PEMBERTON, in *Fleetstreet*: W. MEARS, and J. BROWNE, without
Temple-Bar: And E. SYMON, against the *Royal-Exchange* in *Cornhill*.
M DCC XVII.

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MDCCLXXII.

TO THE
READER.

THE following Discourses were not originally design'd for the Perusal of the Learned, who delight in Polite and Elaborate Pieces, interspers'd with Scholastick Distinctions, and recommended with uncommon Fancies; but were compos'd some Years ago, for the Use of a Country Parish, divided too much about Religion, not a little prejudic'd against the Established Church; and Preach'd with a real Design to show the Excellency of our Principles to that Auditory, and (if it were possible) to convince Gainsayers. The Style chosen to serve this desired End, is Familiar and Easy, such as being adapted to the ordinary Apprehensions of honest Hearers, might settle those of our Communion in their Principles, and reclaim others. When they were pronounced by the Author, they were look'd upon by the most judicious Hearers, as Proper and Edifying; what Acceptance they may meet with from the Press, is not as yet to be known, nor is he much solicitous about it. As he never compos'd them with a Resolution to Publish them to the World, he had never consented to it, had not the Prospect of doing some Good

To the READER.

Good to his Parishioners, and others like them, not much conversant in Books of this Nature, prevail'd with him to send them Abroad in this Dress. He has carefully endeavour'd to express the True and Genuine Sense of the Church of *England*, and upon all Occasions exhorted to Practice; and if he may thus promote the Fear of the Living God amongst the Unlearned, and the Practice of true Religion; if he may thus secure the Esteem and Veneration that is due to Revelation, and the Truths immediately dependent upon it; if he may thus maintain the King's Supremacy, and direct to that Submission and Obedience that is due to him; if he may thus lay open the dangerous Errors of Popery, and the Delusions of that Church; if thus he can abate the Zeal of the Dissenters and prevail with them to own the Truth; and may thus expose the Madriess of Scepticism, Free-thinking, and Enthusiasm, to honest Minds, as the several Articles engage him: The Author will not repent that he has offered this Information to private Families, which may endear the Church-Communion to them, and direct them in that Faith and Practice which leadeth to Eternal Life.

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A N
EXPOSITION
OF THE
Thirty-Nine Articles.

ARTICLE I.

Exod. XX. First Part of the 2d Verse.

I am the Lord thy God.



AS we are the Servants of the Living God, and set apart for his Fear, it is necessary for us to understand his Nature and Government, his Goodness and Power; what He is, and how able to Command and Threaten, to Reward and Punish: who when he descended to speak to *Israel*, He said, **I am the Lord thy God.**

In discoursing on which Words, I shall explain the first Article of our Church; which declares, that "There is but One Living and True God, Everlasting; without Body, Parts, or Passions; of infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness; the Maker and Preserver of all Things, Visible and Invisible; and in the Unity of this Godhead there be Three Persons, of one Substance, Power, and Eternity; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost".

Thus the Article informs you, Who that is, who says, **I am the Lord thy God.** In it we may consider,

- I. That there is One Living and True God, Everlasting; without Body, Parts, or Passions; of infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness.
- II. That this True God is the Maker and Preserver of all Things, both Visible and Invisible.
- III. That in the Unity of this Godhead there are Three Persons, of one Substance, Power, and Eternity; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Article I.

Pfal. 18. 31.
1 Cor. 8. 4.
the latter Part.

1st, There is no other God, but this One Living God ; for were there more, there wou'd be more than one Perfection of Power, Goodness, Knowledge, and Truth : And in this respect Perfection wou'd not be Perfection ; nor infinite Goodness infinite : For that which is distinct Perfection, and separated from one, must be limited, bounded, and finite in regard of another ; and thus to make room for more Gods than One, we streighten, confine, and set Bounds to him, who is not to be comprehended ; which wou'd be a Contradiction. For this Reason there can be but One Almighty, Supreme Being, Perfection it self in his Nature and Attributes, not to be divided or imparted to any other. *Who is, or can be, God save the Lord, or who is a rock save our God ? There is none other God but one.*

Exod. 3. 14.
Joh. 5. 26.

2^{dly}, This One God is the Living God, the Fountain and Original of Life and Being. He calls himself *I am*, as independent in his Essence, Self-subsisting, and receiving Life from no other ; and yet imparting Life and Being to all the Creation : And as he is Perfection, the supreme and best of Beings, it must needs follow, that Life is in him in Perfection. For as we find we live, we are sensible that we did not give Life to our selves, neither can we continue it as long as we please. The Breath that we enjoy was first breathed into us by him : And as we live, and move, and have our Beings in him, we are forced to faint, to yield up the Ghost and dye, when He commands. As we derive Life from him, and are dependant Creatures, we must conclude, that he who imparts Life to us, hath Life in himself : That tho' we depend upon him, he is Self-existent, and can depend upon none, having Life in Perfection in himself, and dividing it in various Channels, and in different Degrees to his Creatures. God said unto Moses, *I am that I am.* *The Father hath Life in himself, and hath given to the Son to have Life in himself.*

Joh. 17. 3.

3^{dly}, He is the true God, or the very Deity we are bound to own, to fear, adore, and obey. All other Gods are vain Idols, meer Shadows and Representations, not worthy of Regard or Obedience ; but he is discover'd to be in Reality, what he says he is, by his Goodness and Power ; and demonstrated the same by his Works of Creation and Providence, that he is true, and deserves the Worship of his People ; for he hath made all Things what they are, provides for Man and Beasts, and confounded all those Idols, that have been set up in Competition with him. He hath wrought such Wonders upon the Earth, and disposes of all Affairs with that Power, that all the World may know that he is true, and that the Gods of the Heathen are but Wood and Stone. *This is Life Eternal, that they might know thee the only true God.*

4^{thly}, This God is everlasting ; for that which is true, must be without Beginning or Ending, from everlasting to everlasting. Perfection cannot but be always the same. If there was a Time when he was not, then there was a Time when he began to be ; and if he had a Beginning, then he receiv'd it from some other, and that other from

from some other; and thus our Thoughts must still run back-wards, and we know not where to stop, till we fix at last in some Self-existent, Incomprehensible Being, who is from everlasting, and owes no part of his Perfection to any thing but himself. And thus we come to acknowledge and confess, that Stupendous, Eternal Being, that God whom we adore and trust in, who always was the same he is, and will be for ever the same, Almighty and Unchangeable Being, who hath been from all Eternity, and remains to all Eternity, who hath been always perfect in himself, and will be perfect, without Beginning or End. *But thou art the same, and thy Tears shall have no end.* Psalm 102:27.

5thly, This Everlasting God hath no Body, is without Body, Parts or Passions, or without any Composition either of gross or refined Matter; he is all Spirit, or a spiritual Being, far above the sublimated Rarefactions of Matter, or the Fumes and Steam of it; hath no Dependence upon it, or essential Connexion with it: For he created Matter out of nothing by the Word of his Power, and is freed from all Commerce with it; is not fetter'd up with Limbs and Nerves, with Veins and Arteries, or any Frame of Flesh and Blood; he hath no Vehicle, Rayment, or Covering of Matter, or any Composition of it; for he is all Spirit, Spirit in Perfection, the purest Act and most Immaterial Substance; and consequently always was, and will for ever remain without Passion or disorder'd Motions, or any Strugglings of Affections, which are the Effects of Matter, or at least are occasion'd and managed by the Conjunction of Matter with Spirit. And of Necessity this great God must be thus Incorporeal, Pure, and Spiritual; for if he had a Body, it must be made up of Parts; and if it consists of Parts, it may be divided: And thus that which we call God, may be made greater or lesser, and may be taken into Pieces; which is a Contradiction. But if he should be represented as having Parts, he cou'd not be present every where at once; for he must be present according to the Proportion of Parts, and must be limited and confin'd in one Place and not another; and thus it will follow, that as he is present where his Body is, there may be many Places where that cannot be; which is a great Diminution to the Divine Majesty, and denies that Omnipresence to him, by which he is always every where, and sees and knows what is done in all Places at once. *God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.* John 4:24.

6thly, He is a God of infinite Power, Strength and Ability for Action; he is so powerful and able, that he can do what he pleases, in Heaven and upon Earth, amongst Angels or Men; there is nothing hath Force enough to hinder his Pleasure, to bar or obstruct his Proceedings; as he hath the Perfection of Power, he can do all Things that are capable of being done, which are not inconsistent with the Purity of his Nature, or which do not imply a Contradiction. Were there any thing stronger than he, he could not be God, nor could retain his Dominion, exercise his Power, or govern the World in his own Way; he could not be pray'd to with Confidence, or trusted to with Assurance, or help his Servants in Time

Article I.

Gen. 18. 1.
latter Part.

of Need. But his Arm is not shorten'd, he hath the Perfection of Power, such as the Deity it self can only wield, such as will support and maintain his Government for ever: For he is the Almighty, he is the same to all, which he was to *Abraham*. *I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.* 2^{dly}, He is also infinite in Wisdom; his Power is not a blind Force, a senseless *Impetus*, or a masterless Whirlwind, which carries all before it, right or wrong: But it is Power in Perfection, which hath infinite Wisdom annex'd to it, and which is ever influenced and guided by it: Every thing which he undertakes to do, is found to be Divine and Rational, fit to be done by him, and in that Order he does it: He is the only Wise; for all Rational Beings derive their Wisdom from him: And he is infinite in Wisdom, because he grasps with one Glance of his Intellectual Eye, all things at once, all that can be discerned above or below, that can be view'd in Act or in Possibility; and can understand how to create and govern a World. We pretend to a little Measure of Wisdom our selves, but he must be vastly wise, who gave us what we have. The Angels are very knowing Creatures, but their Creator must be above them in Understanding: He that is able to impart Wisdom and Knowledge to us, must have both in Perfection; he could not impart such Measures and different Degrees of it, if he did not possess it in its infinite Perfection, and if he was not Wisdom it self without any Diminution. *He that giveth Man Knowledge, shall not be understand?* We must give him the Glory of all that Wisdom, that is found in our selves, or manifested through the whole Creation. He is the only Wise God, and nothing is wise, but as he makes it. *To God only wise be Glory, through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.*

Rom. 16. 27.

8^{thly}, His Goodness is as eternal as his Wisdom: He has that Purity, and Excellency of Nature, by which he is absolutely good in himself, and inclin'd to do good. This is so much a Perfection in him, so Transcendently Sublime, Eminent and Entire, that there is none good but himself, none Absolutely, Independently, Originally, Perfectly, and Eternally good: His very Nature is Righteousness it self, and all the Marks and Appearances of Goodness in the Creation, are impress'd and produc'd by him, and had never been, if not call'd forth by his Gracious Word. As he is good, he always did good, enjoins us to be good, and lays the strictest Obligations upon us to imitate his Goodness, to do good in our Generations, and to prepare by good Works to enjoy him. *O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.*

Psalm 136. 1.

II. This our True and Living God is the Maker and Preserver of all Things, both Visible and Invisible: He by his Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, produc'd all that is in Being above or below.

1st, He made this Lower World, and all the World, or Worlds above, with all the Inhabitants, Angels or Men, and all that therein is, of what Use or Nature soever. We are inform'd, how this World was produc'd by him, and how every Creature came forth, as he

he spake the Word, and commanded it, and took its Place in the Creation according to that Degree of Life, Station and Condition, it was appointed for. And as his Almighty Word created this Lower World; so all the Regions above, all the Orbs or Worlds above, whatever Places they are, were formed by him; he must of necessity be the Creator of all, and none can vye with him in this Honour: For either the Creatures made themselves, or some other made them; If themselves, then we made our selves, and are Self-born, Absolute and Independent Beings; but this we see, and know to be false; for we are sensible we received our Lives from a greater than our selves, and are forc'd to resign them, when he calls for them; If some other made us, that Being must have Power, Wisdom, and Goodness sufficient to accomplish such things: And as no less than the Perfection of Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, can be suppos'd sufficient to create a World, and such Creatures as we are in it; that Being, which is the Creator, must be the Almighty God, whom we own and serve; for whose Will and Pleasure they are, and were created. *By him* Coloss. i. 16. *all things were created, that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, visible and invisible, whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers; all things were created by him, and for him.*

2. He is also the Preserver of all Things, Visible or Invisible; as he call'd them into Being, he continues them in Being, and by his great and everlasting Providence, sustains and maintains them in their proper Stations and Places. Thus he preserves us Men, and provides plentifully for us, affording us richly all Things to enjoy for the Sustenance of Life, Health, and Happiness: And thus he supports the Invisible Creation; he provides for Angels, and produces Things that are suitable for the Continuance of the Angelick Life, by which they live, and shall live for ever, without Fear of Want, or Molestation. All Things subsist by the Power of his Word, and are continued in their respective Lives and Enjoyments, by his Favour and Blessing. If we consider the Nature of Preservation, the same Power will be found necessary to support us, which made us; and the same Hand must feed us, which fashion'd us at first: No Creature, of what Station soever, can continue its own Being without the Concurrence of his Providence. We could not draw in our Breath again, when it is once parted from us, but by that Influence he affords, and that Power he gives to recover it: We cannot raise up Food out of the Earth, if he did not prosper us; nor could we eat or digest it, when we have it, if he did not enable us. The same may be said of all the Creatures of the Visible Creation, that depend upon Matter, as we do: And as for Invisible Things, as different as they may be from us, they must depend every Moment upon him, according to their different Degrees of Life, as we do in ours. Angels are but Creatures, Archangels but Finite Creatures, and cannot supply themselves with Subsistence, but as they receive and take it from the great Creator of that other World, who plentifully affords what they live upon; they perpetually receive from his Presence, or Glory, or some other Way, (as he thinks fit) that

Article I. that which is their Eternal Subsistence. *By him all things subsist. Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things.*

Coloss. 1. 17.
Rom. 11. 36.

III. In the Unity of the Godhead, there are Three Persons of one Substance, Power, and Eternity; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: So there is Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity; One God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in the Unity of the Godhead.

1st. There are Three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, distinct by their own Personality the one from the other: For it is manifest by the Testimony of Scripture, that the Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Father, the Holy Ghost is neither Father, nor Son; but every one is a Person by himself. God says, *Let us make Man*, which is a Calling and Summoning divers Persons to assist in some great Design: It would be very improper and absurd for one Person to say, *Let us do this*; and therefore there are more Persons than one. It is therefore undoubted, that those interpret the Scripture ignorantly and wretchedly, who wou'd have us believe that these Three are no Persons, but Manifestations of the same God; for if they are not distinct Persons, they will bring Confusion upon the Christian Faith, upon the Work of Redemption, and the Day of Judgment; for God the Father made us, God the Son dyed for us, and shall judge us, and God the Holy Ghost sanctifies, and prepares us for both. *There are Three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these Three are One.*

1 John 5. 7.

2. These Three Persons are of One Substance, Power, and Eternity: One in Power, the Father Almighty, the Son Almighty, and the Holy Ghost Almighty: One in Eternity, the Father Eternal, the Son Eternal, and the Holy Ghost Eternal; and yet not Three Almighties, but One Almighty; not Three Eternals, but One Eternal. The Attributes of the Deity are the Attributes of every Person by himself, and are equally asserted of them jointly, and separately, as One God, and Three Persons: We are baptized in the Name of them, as well to show our Belief, as to enter upon his Service. *Go ye therefore, and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

Matth. 28. 19.

3. This one Substance is the Divine Essence, in the Unity of which there are Three Persons; or the Divine Nature of which every Person partakes, and by which every Person is God, and is one and the same in all: The Son hath the same Essence with the Father, and the Holy Ghost the same with Father and Son; and the Essence being one and the same, the Three Persons in the Unity of it are but one, and the same God. Their Persons remain distinct, and will be distinct for ever; for the Person of the Father cannot be the Son, nor the Person of the Son the Father, nor the Person of the Holy Ghost, Father or Son: Their Personal Properties are not to be imparted to one another, they are incommunicable; but their

Essential

Thirty Nine ARTICLES.

7

Essential Properties are given to every one of them, they are Co-
equal and Coeternal. Article II

This is the Sense of the first Article of our most Excellent Church ; by which we may learn to speak of God in her Language , to adore him as the Great Majesty of Heaven and Earth, and to serve him from the Heart. As he lives, we shall live ; as he is true, we are not mistaken : as he is Everlasting, he can promise and give Eternal Life ; as he hath no Body, we must worship him as a Spirit ; as he is not subject to Passions, we must learn of him to be meek and spiritual ; as his Power is infinite, he can do all Things ; as his Wisdom is perfect, he governs well, and rules with Understanding ; as his Goodness is infinite, he will do good, and provide for all ; as he made all Things, he made us, and we are his ; as he preserves all Things, he gives us Life, and Food, and daily provides for our Safety ; and as He is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, we are to worship him, and serve him.

This is that which our Church teaches, that which ye should know and live by, that ye may understand your Religion, and act up to it. Can ye, think ye, belong to such a God, when ye disobey him ? Or can ye believe ye live in, and by him, when ye are unthankful and disobedient ? Consider what ye profess, and remember that your God is a Spirit, and sees you ; and hath Power, and if ye are good, will reward you, if bad, will punish you. Be afraid, and sin no more, for this God is our God, and is a consuming Fire.

Heb. 12. 29.

ARTICLE

Article II.

ARTICLE II.**JOHN I. First Part of the 14th Verse.****The Word was made Flesh:**

THAT God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, cannot be known, but by Revelation. "No Man hath seen God at any Time". The only begotten Son, which is in the Bosom of the Father, he hath declared him: And this Son is the Eternal Word of the Father. **And the Word was made Flesh.**

I shall now explain the Second Article of our Church, which says, "The Son which is the Word of the Father, begotten from Everlasting of the Father, the Very and Eternal God, of one Substance with the Father; took Man's Nature in the Womb of the Blessed Virgin, of her Substance; so that Two whole and perfect Natures, that is to say the Godhead and Manhood, were join'd in one Person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, Very God and Very Man, who suffer'd, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a Sacrifice not only for Original Guilt, but also for all actual Sins of Men". Thus the Article teaches how, and for what Ends the Word became Flesh.

- I. The Son, which is the Word of the Father, begotten from Everlasting of the Father, is Very, Eternal God, of one Substance with the Father.
- II. This Very God took Man's Nature in the Womb of the Blessed Virgin, of her Substance, or was made Flesh.
- III. Two whole and perfect Natures, that is to say, the Godhead and the Manhood, were join'd in one Person, never to be divided.
- IV. He suffer'd, was crucify'd, dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a Sacrifice, not only for Original Guilt, but also for all Actual Sins of Men.

I. The Son, which is the Word of the Father, begotten from Everlasting of the Father, is Very, Eternal God, of one Substance with the Father. So that we are directed to consider Him, as the Word, as Begotten, as Very Eternal God, and as of one Substance with the Father.

1st, We are directed to consider our Saviour as the Word of the Father, or the Reason of the Father, which was manifested in the Beginning, when he created the World, and commanded every Thing

Thing by the Word of his Power, to be what it was : For the Word which had such Energy and Force in it, which called forth every Thing out of Nothing, and said, *Let there be Light, and there was Light.* This same Word was the Son of the Father, from Everlasting with him. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God : the same was in the beginning with God. All Things were made by him, and without him was not any Thing made that was made.*

Article II.

Joh. i. 1, 2, 3.

2. This Word of the Father was begotten of him from Everlasting, and is Co-eternal with him. "I will declare the Decree, the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee. Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever. A Scepter of Righteousness is the Scepter of thy Kingdom. Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the Foundation of the Earth ; and the Heavens are the Work of thy Hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest ; they all shall wax old as a Garment, but thou art the same, and thy Years shall not fail. Thou art a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchizedeck." *And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father.*

Joh. i. 14.

3. Well might he be from Everlasting, or the everlasting Son of the Father, who is the Very Eternal God, God of God ; for it is expressly said, that "God was manifested in the Flesh, justify'd in the Spirit, seen of Angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the World, received up into Glory" ; and that we may not look upon this as an honorary Title, given to him upon the Account of his Office, as "Kings are said to be Gods" ; it is expressly said that "The Word was God, and that he is God Blessed for evermore" ; as whose Divinity is not to end with his Office, but is to remain as his Throne for ever and ever. And therefore he is called the True God, and Eternal Life ; for the True God must remain possessed of Divinity for ever : And Eternal Life cannot end or cease to be. *And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given to us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ : This the true God, and Eternal Life.*

Joh. s. 20.

4. In that he is the True God, he must be of one Substance with the Father : For that which is begotten of the Father, which is Eternal with him, and of Equal Majesty and Power, must be of the same Substance with him ; as much Spirit, and Partaker of the same Essence and Nature, and as truly Divine, as he himself can be. As an earthly Son is of the same earthly Substance with his Father, and has the same Essence of a Man in him : So the Divine Spiritual Son, Eternal, must be of the same Divine, Spiritual, Eternal Nature, or Essence with the Father. And therefore it is expressed, *Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power ; when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the Right Hand of the Majesty on high.* He that is Light of Light, the Brightness of his Father's Glory, that bears his Image, is his very Likeness, the

Heb. i. 3.

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express

Article II.  expresse Image of his Person, must partake of the same Substance and Essence with the Father.

II. This very true God took Man's Nature in the Womb of the Blessed Virgin, of her Substance, and was made Flesh. To explain this, we must consider,

1st, That this Very God took Man's Nature, or became Man, had an Human Body, and a Reasonable Soul, as we have: He had Bone of our Bone, Flesh of our Flesh, was embodied as we are, and dwelt in this Body for a while upon Earth, to satisfy us, that he was in Reality as one of us, Sin only excepted. He was ready to take Possession of this Body, as soon as it was prepared for him; that he might be the true *Immanuel*, *God with us*, or God manifested in the Flesh. *Wherefore when he cometh into the world he saith, Sacrifice and Offering thou wouldest not, but a Body hast thou prepared me. Then said I, Lo! I come, (in the volume of the Book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God.*

Heb. 10. 5, 7.

Luk. 1. 31, 32.

2. This Body he took in the Womb of the Blessed Virgin, of her Substance. That we might apprehend, how this might be, he took our Flesh from her, and was born of her Body, which was sanctify'd for this very Purpose, to receive the Saviour of the World; and that she might be his Mother, as you may read at large in the Scriptures. And as the History of it is true, we can have no Reason to call it into Question, or to entertain the least Doubt of it. The Angel told her, *Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus; and he shall be great, and shall be called the son of the highest. And the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David.*

III. In this Birth, Two whole and perfect Natures, that is to say, the Godhead and the Manhood, were joined in One Person, never to be divided. Consider, I say, (as our Church directs) that Two Natures were joined in One Person, and this Conjunction was so close, as never to be dissolved again.

1. Two Natures, that is to say, the Godhead and the Manhood, were joined in that One Person, Christ Jesus: One Nature did not swallow up or nullify the other, but Both were united by the Hypostatical Union to make One God-Man. The Godhead remained perfect and entire without any Diminution or Degradation, without any lessening or loss of Honour: The Manhood continued limited and finite, as it is in us. So that he was Perfect God and Perfect Man, of a Reasonable Soul and Human Flesh subsisting. The Union of Both the Natures entitled the Person to all the Attributes of either: So that as he was Man, he suffered, and died; and as he was God, he could not suffer or die; and yet as he was God and Man, his Blood was meritorious for us Sinners. *In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten son into the world, that we might live through him.*

1 Joh. 4. 9.

2. These

2. These Two whole and perfect Natures thus joined in One Person, were never to be divided; or this Jesus is to be always God-Man, and the great Mediator betwixt God and Man; no other was admitted to intercede for us: And he was to be for ever our Priest; his Two Natures were to be for ever united. When therefore he suffered upon the Cross, the Godhead and Manhood were not divided; that is, the Son of God, the Eternal Word, and that Human Soul, to which he was joined, were never separated; but the Separation that was made at his Death, was between the Human Soul and the Body, which is truly and properly Death. The Body which hung upon the Cross was dead, his Spirit left it, when he gave up the Ghost: But the Spirit of the Manhood, the Reasonable Soul, which is the Man, remained at the same Time in Union with the Divinity, and returned to the Body, when the Divinity returned, and was united to the Divinity, whilst the Body lay dead in the Grave: So that at his Passion and after it, the Godhead and the Manhood were not divided, nor could be divided. And if Death could not break that Union, they must remain united to all Eternity. For this Reason the Scripture saith, "That the God manifested in the Flesh" *"was received into Glory"*. And what was so united, is Eternal Life. *For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life which was with the father, and was manifested unto us.*

1 John 1. 2.

IV. This Very God in our Flesh suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a Sacrifice not only for Original Guilt, but also for all Actual Sins of Men. Here we are taught to confess his Passion, to declare the Ends of his Death, or why he died, and own the Sacrifice he made of himself for all Sin.

1st, We confess in this our Lord's Passion, that though he was God and Man, he suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, as the History of his Passion sufficiently proves: And therefore I shall not insist upon it, but only observe, that because he was Man, he was in a Capacity of Dying; and that being God-Man, he the self same Person is said to suffer, to be dead, and buried, which shews the Union of Both Natures, and the Liberty to ascribe that to God, which Man underwent, because he that was Man was also God.

2. We thus declare the Ends of Christ's Death, or why he died, which was to reconcile his Father to us, and to atone his Wrath, appease his Anger, or to be a Sacrifice for Sins. Sin had set God at Enmity with Man, and the Son knowing the Displeasure of his Father, comes down from Heaven, and takes upon him our Flesh, that in our Stead and Place he might reconcile his Father, and establish Peace between us. And thus he has obtained Eternal Redemption for us; he has reconcil'd us unto God by the Cross, having slain the Enmity thereby. So that through his Merit, we that were afar-off are made nigh through his Blood; we that were Aliens from the Covenant of Grace, are put into a salvable Condition, may look up for Mercy, and in his Name plead for Acceptance. *All things are of*

2 Cor. 5. 18.

Article II. *God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given unto us the ministry of reconciliation.* He was,

3. A Sacrifice for Sins Original and Actual; not only for Original Guilt, by which the whole Race of Men is corrupted before God, deprived of primitive Innocency, and prone to evil, as the Sin of Adam made them: But he was a Sacrifice for all Actual Sins; for those which every one commits by his own Choice, and in his own Person; and for which every one is responsible according as his Behaviour hath been. He was a Sacrifice for Original Guilt, and Actual Sins, upon Condition, that those which shall receive any Benefit by his Sacrifice, shall sincerely bewail their natural State, truly repent of what they themselves have done amiss, and faithfully live up to the Gospel. By so doing they shall enjoy that Pardon, which he hath promised: But if these Conditions are not observed, they shall neither be freed from Original Guilt nor Actual; tho' he died, they shall have no Benefit by his Death; though he was offered by himself upon the Cross, as a Sacrifice for the Sins of the World, they shall partake of no Fruits of it. And therefore as he was a Sacrifice, and "by one Oblation hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified"; we must become his Disciples, and walk worthy of him, being obedient to him in all Things, as we desire to be freed from Adam's Pollution, and from our own Actual Transgressions. If we are believing and dutiful, his Sacrifice is a sufficient Oblation and Satisfaction for our Sins, and for the Sins of the whole World. *My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not; and if any man sin we have an advocate with the father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.*

1 Joh. 2. 1, 2.

This is the Sense of the Article; and from it we may admire at the Condescension of our Lord, our Capacity of living with him in Heaven, the Vastness of his Love, and the Hope we have by it of Pardon and Acceptance.

1st. We ought to admire at the Condescension of our Lord, who visited us in our fallen State, and submitted to the Sorrows of Human Life, to rescue and save us. For though he was the Son of God, he yielded to be as the Son of Man: Tho' he was the Word of the Father, by which he made the World, he was contented to speak to us, and to shew us the Way to Life and Happiness; Tho' he was the only begotten Son of the Father, "he came to seek and save that which was lost"; that he might purchase for us the Adoption of Sons, and prevail with his Father to be our Father, and with his God to be our God; Tho' he was from Everlasting, and was above the Enjoyments of Human Life, which are but for a Time, and will soon end, he thought fit to live amongst us, to fare as hardly as we do, that he might win us by his familiar Acquaintance, and shew us how to obtain the Bread and Water of Life, that we might hunger and thirst no more: Nay, though he was the Very Eternal God, of the same Substance with the Father, lived in Heaven as he did, enjoyed what he enjoyed, and was as happy as God himself can be; yet this Very God became dying Man, in

or-

order to redeem us from the Curse of the Law, to deliver us from the Slavery of Sin and Satan, and to restore us to the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God; he humbled himself to take our Nature in the Womb of the blessed Virgin, was born an Infant, grew up to Childhood and Manhood, passed through the different Stages of human Life, was Hungry and Thirsty, Sorrowful and Heavy, Imprisoned and Slain, that we might not fall under his Father's Displeasure, and perish in our Sins. These are such wonderful Condescensions as may amaze us, when we ponder upon them: These are such Discoveries of Tenderness and Love, as may conquer the very worst of us, and constrain us to break off a vicious Course of Life, and to become new Men in Obedience to him: For his Kindness exceeds all that Men have done or can do for Men; surpasses all our Expectations, was more than we can ask or imagine, and should prevail with us to take him for our Lord, to admire at his meritorious Death, and to obey him from the Heart. For who could have thought that the Son of God, so great in himself, and of that Superlative Majesty, shou'd take upon him such an humble Appearance, and bear such Sorrows in our behalf! We must be void of Understanding, if this does not gain our Approbation; and Strangers to Humanity and good Nature, if this does not captivate us in his Fear, and lead us into Righteousness. How can we sin, that have been thus delivered by the Son of God?

2. This may assure us, that if we live here as he commands us, we are very capable of living with him in Heaven. He hath shewn us this Capacity in taking our Nature upon him, and ascending with it into Heaven. For if that Body which was born of the Virgin, that was Flesh and Blood, like our Body, was raised up by him, and received into Glory; what should or can hinder us from following him, or being where he is? Did he carry our Manhood into Heaven, and can he not take us up thither? 'Tis said indeed that *flesh and blood cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven: neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.* But cannot the same Power that made his Body glorious, prepare ours for the same Region? Are we not to be "changed in a Moment, in the Twinkling of an Eye, at the last Trump?" And shall not "our vile Bodies be made like unto his glorious Body, according to the mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all Things to himself?" We may then safely rely upon his Word, and trust to follow him to the same Place; for we are capable of the Change, and of the Removal. Our Nature in him is already exalted, and shall never be divided from him. And if we can have Faith, can live according to his Will, and can persevere in Well-doing, we shall be where he is, shall behold his Glory, and partake of it to all Eternity. As we are already capable, we shall enter, if we faint not. He thus prayed in our Behalf to his Father; and we may trust to him for the Performance, for the Father will not deny him: *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold the glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the Foundation of the World.*

Joh. 17. 24

3dly,

Article II.

3dly, His Love is vast and perpetual: He hath sacrificed himself for the Sins of all Mankind, and hath proclaimed Mercy in the Ears of all, that every one that hears of it may believe, and be saved. If we trust to him as we ought, not our original Guilt shall hurt us, not our actual Sins shall condemn us, not the Fall of *Adam* shall ruin us, nor our own Presumption shall undo us; for as he hath offered himself to his Father to be a Sacrifice for Original Guilt, and all Actual Sins, the greatest of Sinners that return and amend, may hope; the most forward and bold in Vice, whose Hearts smite them, and who are truly grieved for offending him, who are true Believers and true Penitents, may look up for Mercy. The Blood of such a Sacrifice will cleanse them from all Sin: Such a Priest will atone for them with Success; and such Merits as he presents to the Father will obtain their Pardon. Though then our Consciencés accuse us, though our Sins are many, our Guilt great, and we may have cause to tremble at the Wrath of God, yet if we are at last humble and penitent, if we do in earnest reform and live as Christians; tho' our Sins are many, they shall be forgiven, tho' provoking, they shall for his Sake be remembered no more. *For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more,* according to the Covenant in his Blood.

Heb. 8. 12.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE III.

ACTS II. First Part of the 27th Verse.

Because thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell.

WHEN our Lord gave up the Ghost, and was dead upon the Cross, his Spirit departed, and went into Paradise; his Body was taken down, and laid in a Tomb. This separate State is represented to be the same which is here call'd Hell. **Because thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell.** His Body was to rest in Hope, because his Soul was not to be left in Hell, in that separate State, in which the Souls of other Men are placed.

I shall explain the Third Article of our Church, which saith, "As Christ died for us, and was buried; so also it is to be believ'd, that he went down into Hell."

Upon which we may consider that our Church declares,

- I. That Christ in some Sense went down into Hell.
- II. That so much Stress is to be laid upon this, that it is to be believed, as well as that he died for us, and was buried.

I shall therefore examine in what Sense this is to be taken; produce the Scriptures it is establish'd upon, and shew how the same is distinct from any other Part of the Creed.

1st, The Intent or Sense of this Article is to be enquired after, that we may understand what is meant by his Descent into Hell: And if we will attend to Reason, we must think it belongs to his Spirit, as he was a Man. It could not be true of his Divinity, for that was always present every where; nor of his Body, for that was confin'd in the Tomb, and according to the Nature of it, could be but there, and no where else. It remains then that he descended into Hell, with his Rational Spirit, as he was a Man. And amongst the various Accounts that are given of it, this seems to be most likely and agreeable, that the Reasonable Soul of Christ, that better, noble, and immortal Part of his Humanity, after a true and proper Separation of it from his Body, that which the *Jews* could not kill, and which surviv'd their Cruelty, was really and truly carried into those Parts, or Regions below, where Spirits separated from their Bodies reside (or the Souls of Men departed are detain'd), and underwent the Condition of such as die, and leave their Bodies to the Earth. For as he took upon him the Place of a Sinner, and died for our Sins upon the Cross,

Artic. III.  Cross, his Soul went to the Place where the Souls of Men are kept, who die for their Sins; and so wholly did undergo the Law of Death, which is, that the Soul and Body should be separated; and as the Body is lodged in the Earth, the Spirit should go to the Region of Spirits, and stay a-while with them. And as according to the Behaviour of Men on Earth, their Souls are allotted different Habitations; the bad go into a Place of Torment, the bottomless Pit, that Dungeon of Woe and Misery: The Vertuous and Good into a Place of Joy and Peace, which is called Paradise, *Abraham's Bosom*, and Heaven: The Sense of this Article is diversified. For some say that his separated Spirit went to both Places, to be in the same Condition with both: Others, that it went without doubt to the Place of the Righteous, but that it went not to the Region of Woe, to endure any Thing there; which in Reason appears to be most consonant to Scripture. For there can be no doubt made concerning his going to that Place, where the Spirits of just Men wait for a glorious Resurrection, or are treasur'd up and lodg'd against the great Day. For he told the penitent Thief who petition'd him to remember him when he came into his Kingdom, *This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.*

All the Difficulty then is, whether he went to the Place where guilty Spirits are tormented for their Sins, to partake with them of their Misery. Some will acknowledge, that his Spirit went thither, not to endure Torment, but to triumph over Satan, and all his Legions in his own Territories (which appears agreeable enough, were we sure that he did descend thither) to display his Majesty, and shew his Power in their Torments. But this being only probable in it self, a pious Guess, or a devout Fancy, cannot be positively declar'd to be the Sense of the Article. But it is no less than Blasphemy to assert, that he went down into Hell, to bear the Torments of the damned. For there is a Worm in them which never dies, which could not lodge in his innocent Spirit. There is a Fire that feeds upon them, which is never extinguish'd, which could not seize upon his righteous Soul. The Damned are under a constant Apprehension of God's everlasting Displeasure, which he could not entertain; under an utter Impossibility of ever obtaining Favour, which could not affect him; for he constantly look'd upon the Reward that was before him, knew the Beginning and End of his sufferings, according to the Covenant made with his Father, and finished all upon the Cross, when he said, *It is finished.* So that he could not possibly be said to have been in the same Condition with the damned, or strictly or perfectly to have endured the Pains of Hell. So that the true Sense of the Article in all likelihood must be this, That when his Spirit parted from his Body, it went into the Place of separated good Spirits, that as his Body was made conformable to theirs, being laid in the Earth; so his Spirit was conveyed to the same Receptacles, or Places of abode, where theirs remain, where the Spirit of the Penitent Thief was dispos'd, and satisfied the Laws of Death in his Spirit, as he did in his Body. To clear this further, I shall,

2. Produce those Scriptures this Exposition is established upon. **Artic. III.**
 But before I mention them, I must premise, that the Word, which we interpret Hell, does signify the State of Separation, or the State of the Dead, not only in Scripture, but also in prophane Authors: And for this Reason our Interpretation seems to be defective, in fixing here the Notion upon Hell, which in our Language usually denotes the Place of Torment. For it sounds very oddly and incongruous to call Paradise Hell, or the separated State the Place of Torment; for no Propriety of our Language will admit of such an harsh Expression; and yet the Word might with better Success have been expounded in that manner, as in this Place, where it is said, *Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell.* It gives an Occasion for People to think, that God would not leave his Son's Soul in the Place of Torment; whereas if it had been interpreted, thou wilt not leave my Soul in the separate State, amongst the Spirits of dead Men, (as the Word *ᾍδης* will bear), it had been easy for every one to understand it; for then the Meaning had been obvious, that God would not leave the Spirit of his Son, to remain amongst the Spirits of other dead Men, that were good in their Generations; but would restore it to his Body, before his Body saw Corruption: As you may find it express'd at large; *My flesh also shall rest in hope, because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption.* His Flesh did not see Corruption, tho' it was in the Grave, the Place of Corruption: Because the Promise was, that it should be raised up before it was corrupted. And his Spirit was not to be left in Hell, or the Place of separated Spirits, but in a short time was to return to his Body, and to be re-united with it, according to the same Promise.

So that the Scripture cannot well be understood, if such an Interpretation is not admitted, which explains his being really and truly in the State of the Dead, as the Spirits of good Men departed are, and as ours in a short time shall be; the Body being lodged in the Earth, and the Spirit in a State of Separation. This is plainly set forth in another Place of Scripture, in which he is said to *ascend, who first descended into the lowermost parts of the earth*, or into that separate State. For Criticks do agree in this, that the Word which we call Hell, signifies the same with the lowermost Parts of the Earth, and that the lowermost Parts of the Earth is a good and proper Exposition of *ᾍδης* (*Hades*), or that which we interpret Hell, or the State of Separation. And the descending thither is not only the Descent of the Body into the Tomb, but the Descent of the Spirit into that Region of Spirits (wherever it is), where the Souls of just Men wait for the Summons of the great Day, when they shall be remanded to their Bodies, and be for ever with the Lord. *Now that he ascended, what is it, but that he descended first into the lowermost parts of the earth.* Ephes. 4. 9.

3. This Exposition of the Descent of Christ's Spirit into Hell, makes the Sense quite distinct from any other Part of the Creed; and there is no Tautology or Repetition of the same Sense in another Article contain'd or express'd. For if by descending into Hell

Artic. III. be meant no more; than his being dead and laid in the Grave (as not a few expound the Article), it then can signify no more than what was mention'd before, *dead and buried*. But if by descending into Hell, we intend his Spirit's going into the separate State of Souls, it stands an Article by it self, and signifies more than being dead and buried; for it then denotes his being and remaining in the separate State of Spirits, that he might fulfil all the Law of Death, and return from it to be re-united to his Body, and to rise again from the dead.

II. Our Church puts so much stress upon this Article, that she teaches to believe it, and declares it to be an Article of our Faith, that he went down into Hell, when his Soul, his rational Spirit was separated from his Body. It must go some whither, and remain there, till it was to return to the Body. Where could that be, but to that Place, where departed Spirits go and remain? And his Spirit was the holiest and most innocent, that ever visited or passed through the Regions of Death. To what Company of Spirits could it go, but to the Blessed, who liv'd in Expectation of a joyful Resurrection, which he himself was to procure for them? And as soon as he arrived there (if we may allow our Fancy to represent the Joy of those happy Spirits upon his Arrival) we may without Mistake presume, that the Patriarchs received him with astonishing Gladness; that the Prophets entertained him with extatick Transports; that all the wondering Company heard him tell of his Coming, in order to deliver them, with most sensible Joy and Admiration. Had we been amongst them, how should we have congratulated his Presence, fixed our Hopes upon him, and with an Assurance expected from him a joyful Resurrection? Distressed Captives cannot with more Joy receive their Deliverer, than those happy Spirits imprison'd by Death, did admire their Saviour's Spirit, and expect compleat Deliverance from him. And in this Sense St. Peter's Words will bear a probable Interpretation: *Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit, by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison.*

1 Pet. 3. 18,
19.

From this Exposition of the Article, we may contemplate the Vastness of our Saviour's Love, the Assurance he has given that Death and Hell shall not have Dominion over us, the Courage we should take when dying, and going into that separate State, from whence we shall be call'd to a glorious Resurrection.

1st. We cannot but contemplate the Vastness of our Saviour's Love, the Height of his Kindness towards us in this mortal State; for he has put himself into the Condition of a dead Man, and has satisfied all the Laws of Death; and as he condescended to dye for us, and that his Body should be laid in the Earth, as usually other dead Bodies are: So he consented that his Spirit should be conveyed to those Regions, where the Souls of good Men reside, that wait for Deliverance by him; that in all Respects he might become as one of us, Sin only excepted, and tread in those dark Paths of Death and Separation, which other Spirits of Men had trod before him,
and

and that by passing to and remaining in those dismal Region, he might discover his great Compassion towards us, pity us the more when dying, and upon our Passage into Separation, provide the more for our Safety and Peace. That as in his Days when upon the Earth, he bore our Sorrows, and endured our Grievs, was touched with the Feeling of our Infirmities, and the Trouble that attended them; so in the Time of his Separation, when he for our Sakes descended into the lowermost Parts of the Earth, and visited the dark Regions of the dead, and went into the Place of separate Souls, he was sensible of our Condition, knew what it was to be a separate Soul, and can pity us the more, who must remain in that State of Separation till the Day of Judgment. He shew'd what it was to have been there soon after his Return, when he was risen from the dead, in that he refused to be touched by Mary, because he had not as yet appeared with his human Spirit before his Father. For as for his Body he was willing it should be touched and handled by Thomas, and the rest of his Disciples. *Handle me, and see, for a Spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.* And yet tho' he was in this Body, when he spake to Mary, which he was willing soon after should be touch'd, and handled, and examin'd nicely as a Body, he was not (upon his immediate Return from the Place of separate Souls) willing it should be so much as touched, or handled till he had ascended to his Father; or till his human Soul, which had been in the separate State, and was but just then united to his Body, had appeared in the Eternal Word before the Father. Thus, as before his Crucifixion, he had, though on Earth, ascended into Heaven with it (*Joh. 3. 13*). So after his Resurrection, he was to ascend with the same human Spirit by the Eternal Word, before his Body could be handled. *Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father.* Which must denote that his Soul had not ascended to his Father, whilst his Body remained in the Grave, but was disposed of elsewhere for a time, amongst departed Souls; where he saw and conversed with them, understood their State, and how they waited for his glorious Appearance to Judgment. But now upon his Resurrection he must first ascend to his Father with it, and then he would submit to be touch'd, and out of Pity to them, give them forther Satisfaction concerning his Kindness towards them. It follows: *Go to my Brethren, I must say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, I say unto you, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father.* By this Love of our Lord we are assured, that Death and Hell can have no Dominion over us, when we are in our separate State. Here indeed the Devil roars and rages, knowing that his Time is but short, and applies his Darts and Temptations to deceive and hurt us. And therefore we are commanded to watch and pray, to resist the Evil One, to struggle and strive for the Mastery against him, and must do our best to observe his Snares, to thum his Designs, and conquer him. But if we hold fast our Integrity to the End, die in the Faith and Fear of God, we may be confident that he shall have no Part in us, and can hurt us no more, though we pass by his

Artic. III.

Joh. 20. 17.

Joh. 20. 17.

Artic. III. Dominions into that separate State. For our Lord has so weaken'd him by his Cross, disabled him by his Death, and destroyed his Dominions by entering the Grave, and visiting the separate State of Spirits, that he cou'd not, by all the Force he could rally, confine his Body to the Tomb; or by all the Powers that he could make or raise, detain his Spirit among separated Spirits, or hinder the Union of it with his Body, or prevent his Resurrection. And as our Lord thus conquer'd him in his own Territories, and triumphed over him when he had the Power of Death, we may be sure he cannot hurt us when we die, or when our Spirits pass into the separate State. And as he had no Power over our Lord, he can have no Power over us, when we are passing into the Region of Spirits, or when we shall wait for the Time of Restitution of all Things. Our Lord worsted him in his own Dominions, made him stoop and yield to him, when he was upon Earth; humbled him when in the lowermost Parts of the Earth, and in a State of Separation. And as he who is our Head and Lord was so victorious, we that are his Servants shall conquer, whensoever we pass through those dark Dominions, and shall escape all those Terrors, which may beset the Path to our separate State, and threaten all the Passengers entering it. The Psalmist could say in Prospect of this; *Yea, tho' I walk thro' the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.*

3dly, We have Reason to take Courage, when we are going to that separate State. For though we must die, we shall go to that Place, where our Saviour hath been; hath secured our Passage, will guard us from all the Ambushes of the Evil One, and will preserve us in Safety till his own Coming. We should therefore with Resignation upon a Death-Bed resolve to commit our selves to his Keeping; for we shall not travel in a Path that is dark and desolate, through which none of our Friends have passed before, but shall go in the same which our Lord and Saviour hath pass'd through, in which his Disciples have followed, and which all good Men before us have visited. We shall get to that separate State, which our Lord hath honoured with his Presence, in which the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Martyrs wait for the Coming of their Lord, and a glorious Resurrection; and in which the Spirits of just Men, and we with them, shall please our selves with the Memory of a well spent Life, and the approaching Hour, when we shall be remanded to our Bodies, to meet the Lord in the Air, and to be for ever with him. We shall be in the Bosom of *Abram*, a Place of Peace and Joy, of Happiness and Glory: We shall be in Paradise, which is as like Heaven as any Thing can be on this Side the Day of Judgment; nay, it is in some Sense Heaven, where God displays his Favour, and our Lord manifests a gracious Presence: Where the Holy Spirit sheds a broad Love, Joy, and Peace in the Soul; and where every Spirit entertains it self with the comfortable Expectation of more Glory and Joy: When we shall be perfected by a glorious Resurrection, or have our perfect Consummation and Bliss, both in Body and Soul, in

Psal. 23. 4.

in Eternal and Everlasting Glory : We may well submit to Death **Artic. IIIA**
with Peace, when the next Remove shall be so happy, and our
Resurrection perfect and glorious. *And I say unto you, that many*
shall come from the East and West, and shall sit down with **Math. 8. 11.**
Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of Hea-
ven.

The Word is then inward, and hath appeared
unto Simon.

AFTER the Spirit of our Lord had remained in the separate
State for a while, it returned to his Body, was re-united to
it, and he rose again, as the Eleven Apostles declared, saying,
The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon.
I shall explain the Fourth Article of our Church, which declares
that "Christ did truly rise again from Death, and took again his
Body, with Flesh, Bones, and all Things pertaining to the Per-
fection of Man's Nature; wherewith he ascended into Heaven,
and there sitteth, until he return to judge all Men at the last Day."
Upon which I shall consider,

I. That Christ did really and truly arise from the dead, and took
again his Body, with Flesh and Bones, and all Things pertain-
ing to the Perfection of human Nature.

II. That with it he ascended into Heaven, and there sitteth, or

ARTICLE

III. He shall return to judge all Men at the last Day, when he
shall come in flaming fire, to avenge himself upon those, who
know not God, and obey not his holy Gospel.

I. Christ did truly and really arise from the dead, taking again
that Body, which hung upon the Cross, and was then in the Tomb,
with Flesh and Bones, and all Things pertaining to human Nature.

As he did really and truly arise from the dead, or come alive out
of the Tomb, in which he was laid. This is a plain Matter of Fact,
and appears credible and worthy of Belief, by the Probability of it,
and the undoubted Testimonies of credible Witnesses, it depends up-
on.

The Probability is obvious and great; for as he was God, equal
with the Father, it was impossible that Death should detain him in
its Power; and as he had the Power to lay down his Life, and to
take it up again, he would without doubt employ the same Power
to resume that Life which he had laid down; and as he voluntarily
died for the Sins of the World, would as voluntarily live again
for the justification of sinners: So that considering his Divinity,
and the Authority he was invested with, it was likely enough, that
as he submitted to dye, he would return from the Grave at his own

Artic. IV.

ARTICLE IV.

LUKE XXIV. 34.

The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon.

AFTER the Spirit of our Lord had remained in the separate State for a while, it returned to his Body, was re-united to it ; and he rose again, as the Eleven Apostles declared, saying, **The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon.**

I shall explain the Fourth Article of our Church, which declares that "Christ did truly rise again from Death, and took again his Body, with Flesh, Bones, and all Things appertaining to the Perfection of Man's Nature ; wherewith he ascended into Heaven, and there sitteth, until he return to judge all Men at the last Day". Upon which I shall consider,

- I. That Christ did really and truly arise from the dead, and took again his Body, with Flesh and Bones, and all Things pertaining to the Perfection of human Nature.
- II. That with it he ascended into Heaven, and there sitteth, or remaineth until;
- III. He shall return to judge all Men at the last Day, when he shall come in flaming Fire, to avenge himself upon those, who know not God, and obey not his holy Gospel.

I. Christ did truly and really arise from the dead, taking again that Body, which hung upon the Cross, and was then in the Tomb, with Flesh and Bones, and all Things pertaining to human Nature.

1st, He did really and truly arise from the dead, or come alive out of the Tomb, in which he was laid. This is a plain Matter of Fact, and appears credible and worthy of Belief, by the Probability of it, and the undoubted Testimonies or credible Witnesses it depends upon. The Probability is obvious and great ; for as he was God, equal with the Father, it was impossible that Death should detain him in its Power ; and as he had the Power to lay down his Life, and to take it up again, he would without doubt employ the same Power to reassume that Life which he had laid down ; and as he voluntarily died for the Sins of the World, would as voluntarily live again for the Justification of Sinners : So that considering his Divinity, and the Authority he was invested with, it was likely enough, that as he submitted to dye, he would return from the Grave at his own Time,

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The Testimonies of Persons fit to be credited assure us, that this was done; that he did truly arise again the Third Day. These Witnesses were some of them Enemies, and some his Friends; but all agree, that the same Jesus, which was dead, was alive again. "Some of the Watch that were appointed to guard the Sepulchre, came into the City, and shewed unto the chief Priests all Things that were done": How an Angel of the Lord descended from Heaven, rolled the Stone from the Sepulchre, and that Jesus was risen. These Men could not be supposed to report any Thing in Favour of him, being authoriz'd to guard his Body, that it might not be stole away. And yet though they were employed by his Enemies, and were no Friends to him themselves, they told the Chief Priests what they had seen, and how that the same Body, which they had guarded, was come to Life again. For when they had told the Priests what they saw, the Priests gave them Money to turn their Story; and desired them to say, that "his Disciples came by Night, and stole him away while we slept". As if Men that were asleep could tell what was become of him. This is the Testimony of Enemies, which must be looked upon to be sound and good, as having no Design to promote, no Interest to serve, and no Advantage to make by it. Artic. IV.

And after such an honest Confession of his Enemies, the Testimony of his Friends may be admitted, as firm and good: For the Disciples unanimously declared, and maintained to their Death, that the same Jesus, which was crucified, dead, and buried, did arise with his Body from the Dead. The Holy Women attested it to be true, who attended his Cross, and waited at his Sepulchre: The Seven Disciples that conversed with him after he was risen, that handled and searched his Wounds, that did eat and drink with him, published his Resurrection as most certain: And above Five hundred at once unanimously own'd, that they saw him; that they knew it was he himself, and that there could be no Mistake in it.

When therefore Enemies and Friends agree in the Relation, when Men and Women attest the same Thing, when above Five hundred at once are satisfied by their own Eyes, that it is the very same Jesus that was dead, that was then a-live before them; we might entertain the Report as certain, rely upon it as true, and credit it as undeniable; for there could be no Mistake in such Evidence, made up of such different Persons, and agreeing in the same Thing. To this I may add the Declaration of Angels, if we will admit them as competent Witnesses amongst mortal Men. *He is not here, he is risen, as he said; Come, and see the place where the Lord lay.*

March. 24. 6.

2dly, When he arose, he took again his Body with Flesh and Bones; his rational Spirit returned to the same Body it was in before, and acted in the same Flesh, and with the same Bones: His Resurrection was in a manner peculiar to his Body; for his Soul lived in the separate State, when that hung dead upon the Cross, and was laid dead in the Tomb, and no Part was truly dead, but the Body. In order to raise this up, or to give it a proper Resurrection, it was necessary that this dead Part should live again, by a Re-union of the Ratio-

Artic. IV. Rational Soul unto it ; that his Flesh and Bones should be filled with Life, and become as lively as they were before, when he hung alive upon the Cross; and according to the Evidence of the Disciples already mentioned, they found the Scars, where the Nails and Spears had pierced it, and were fully satisfied, that it was no Appearance or Shadow, but a Real and True Body, the very same which was dead, and was then alive. For when some of them were affrighted at the Suddenness of his Appearance, and thought they had seen a Spirit ; He condescends to be examined, and removes their Fears, and their Doubts concerning him. *Behold my hands, and my feet, that it is I myself ; handle me, and see ; for a Spirit hath not Flesh and Bones, as ye see me have.*

Luk. 24. 39.

3. This his Resurrection was compleat, he did not leave any principal Part of his Body in the Tomb ; but brought it out entire, with all Things that pertain to the Perfection of human Nature ; all that properly belongs to the Body ; without which the Resurrection had been imperfect. For whatsoever is defective in any necessary Part, is not perfect in its Kind, or entire as it ought to be. That therefore his Resurrection might be proper and entire, wanting nothing, he left nothing in the Tomb, that was properly belonging to the Body ; but assumed the whole System of Nature, and brought the same Body out of the Tomb that was carried thither. And this the Evidence of his Disciples confirm'd ; for they found it upon Examination to be the same Body, and saw that he did eat and drink with them, as he did before his Passion ; for when they believed not, for Joy at the Surprise they were in, he gave them this Satisfaction concerning the Reality of his Body. *And when they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat ? and they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honey-comb, and he took it, and did eat before them.* Which did plainly shew that his Body was perfect, and his Resurrection entire.

Luk. 24. 41,
42, 43.

II. With this Body thus raised to Life, he ascended into Heaven, and there sitteth or remaineth ; or he carried this very Body into Heaven with him, and continueth there in the same Body.

1st, With this Body, Flesh, and Bones, he ascended into Heaven ; for it was the self same Body that was seen, handled, and known by the Disciples, that was taken up into Heaven ; the very same Body that did eat and drink in their Presence ; which appeared to them often after his Resurrection, and was sufficiently prov'd to have all Things in it, pertaining to the Perfection of human Nature. A Cloud received it out of their Sight, after it was removed from the Earth through the Sky into Heaven. 'Tis therefore Part of our Faith, that the Body of Jesus, in which he rose from the dead, is exalted into Heaven.

I know it is objected by some, " that Flesh and Blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of Heaven ; and that Corruption cannot inherit Incorruption ". This is true ; but then we must consider, that this is spoken of Flesh and Blood, which is corruptible, and subject to the Law of Death : For that cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven,

Heaven, and cannot last for ever. But, I hope, those that make this Objection, will not say, that our Saviour's Body, after its Resurrection, was a corruptible Body; for it had passed through the Dominions of Death, and came refined from the Grave. His mortal Part became immortal; his corruptible Part incorruptible: And tho' it was still Flesh and Bones, it was spiritualized and changed, tempered and prepared for another Region; and then it might ascend, and sit, and remain above.

Artic. IV.

Our Saviour's Body therefore was a Glorious Body, but a Body still, Flesh and Bones still, but not so gross and heavy as ours, which are mortal; but an incorruptible Body, qualified for a better Region, such as could abide the Purity of the Celestial Air, and live for ever in perfect Happiness and Glory. It was Flesh and Bones immortalized, made capable of remaining in Being, and of continuing entire without any other Alterations. The Angels assure us that this is true, when they said to the Disciples, *Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, that is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come, in like manner as ye have seen him go into Heaven.* He was seen to go with the same Flesh and Bones, which he had before he was crucified, which he arose with from the Grave, which they had handled, and knew to be an entire Body: And with this self-same Body he shall return to judge the World. For,

Act. 1. 11.

2. With this same Body he sitteth, remaineth, or continueth in Heaven: It is a Body in that Place which we call Heaven, and in that Place it shall remain, till the Time appointed. So that we may not expect his bodily Presence upon Earth, till that time be expired: For it is to remain above, and shall remain above, till he shall return with it to take an Account of the World. In this Interval he sitteth at the Right Hand of God, and shall so remain till the last Day. *Whom the heavens must receive until the times of Restitution of all things; which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy Prophets, since the world began.*

Act. 3. 21.

III. This Body is thus to remain, till he comes to judge all Men at the last Day. "For the Father hath appointed a Time in which he will judge the World in Righteousness, and the People with his Truth". And this Jesus in his Body shall come to judge the World: He shall judge all Men according to their Works; and their eternal Doom shall be allotted to them according to their Works.

1st, This Jesus, in his Body, shall so come to judge the World: The Father hath appointed him to ascend the Tribunal, authoriz'd him to be the Judge, and in his Name to summon and judge the World. And we can expect no other. He told the *Jews*, That the Father judgeth no Man, but hath committed all Judgment to the Son, and hath given him Authority to execute Judgment: And in Consideration of this, he adds, *Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power; and coming in the clouds of heaven.* And who can be more able to examine and judge the World, or more proper? As he is God, he knows all Things, and can bring to light the hidden

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Works

Artic. IV. Works of Darknes ; and as he is the Son of Man, he can be familiar and favourable, as there shall be Cause, can deal with Men as Men, reward the Righteous in Love, and punish the Wicked in his Wrath. We are therefore assured, that he hath all Power given him in Heaven and Earth, hath the Keys of Hell and Death: All that are in their Graves shall come forth, and appear before him ; for God hath authoriz'd him for it. *He hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained ; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.*

Acts 17. 31.

2. He shall judge all Men ; so his Commission expresseth it, and his Authority enables him ; and not one can be excused from appearing before him : We must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, High and Low, Princes and People, Rich and Poor, all of them are subject to him, under his Government and Laws, and accountable to his Justice ; and all must and shall give an account of their own Works, how secret, hidden, or bad soever ; and shall be dealt with in a just and righteous Way : If they have done good, they shall have the Praise, and the Reward of it ; but if they have been wicked, they shall bear the Shame and the Punishment. As no Slanders, nor Calumnies shall prejudice the Vertuous, no Privacy nor Power shall skreen the vicious : As sly as they are, they shall then be brought to light ; and as powerful as they seem to be, they shall be forced to hear and bear their Doom. For he cometh to judge all, and all shall appear. The Earth shall yield up her dead, the Sea shall surrender her dead, and all must come forth, " they that have done good, to the Resurrection of Life, and they that have done evil, to the Resurrection of Damnation ". *We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

2 Cor. 5. 10.

3. Their eternal Doom shall be allotted to them by him according to their Works : As he is Judge, his Sentence must determine their State ; and as he is Just, what he resolves upon shall be righteous, and agreeable to the Nature of their Actions. If they have any Title to his Mercy through his own Blood, it shall be admitted ; and he will most willingly bless those for whom he died : But if they have been impenitent and disobedient, and have sinned away the Season for Mercy, and died in their Sins, he will condemn them in Righteousness. And what he pronounces must stand for good, and shall remain in Force to all Eternity ; no Favour shall reverse it, no Power can make it void. The Father hath put all Judgment into his Hands, and what he pronounces is ratified for ever, and shall remain unalterable to all Eternity. Those whom he blesteth are blessed, and those whom he curseth are cursed for evermore. The Devils find it so to their Amazement ; and evil Men will experience it in their eternal Torment. *It is he that is ordained of God to judge the quick and the dead.*

Acts 10. 42.

It

It will be proper to consider, what ye have done, to make ready Artic. IV.
for Judgment, and to expect no Favour at his Hands, but as ye are
qualified for it by Obedience to his Gospel.

1st, What have ye done? How have ye lived? In what Preparation are ye to appear before this Lord? For as certain as he ascended into Heaven with his Body, he will come again in the Air to call you to an Account. That very Jesus, that rose again from the dead, will raise up all that are dead, and you too when dead, and will restore their Bodies to them again, and to you also; and will make you answer for all that ye have done before him: And let it be never so bad, never so shameful and abominable, out it must come; for he will manifest it, and charge it home upon you, insomuch that ye cannot deny it, or escape his Censure. What therefore have ye done? What must ye answer for? What will be laid to your Charge? Ye must needs know what ye have done amiss: Ye must needs be acquainted with your own Privacies and Retirements; and Conscience will hide nothing from you. What then have ye done? Are ye in a meet Condition to appear before him? In a proper Temper to stand before his Throne? If ye are, it will be your Praise, and eternal Comfort: For *if our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God.* But if ye are in no Condition to stand before this Judge; if your Sins call for Vengeance, and your Consciences accuse you, and ye have the Dread and Terror of Guilt and Punishment upon you: What will ye do? For come he will; he may be here on the sudden, or may take you away suddenly: And what will ye do then? For something must be done, if ye intend to be safe. *Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly amongst them, of all the ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all the hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.* What will ye do then? But, Jude 4.

2. Make ready for Judgment; hasten with all Speed, and delay no longer; for he may be here, before ye are aware. "Cease to do Evil, learn to do Good": Repent of Sin, mourn over your Guilt, amend your Lives, and pray to him for Pardon and Peace, for Grace to help, and his Spirit to assist you; that ye may recover your selves from the Errors of your Ways, and may give up your Accounts with Joy, and not with Grief. Be as speedy in this as if ye heard the Trumpet sound, saw him in the Clouds, and expected every Moment to be called for. For thus it may happen, "When Men shall say, Peace, Peace, Destruction shall come upon them, as Travail cometh upon a Woman, and they shall not escape". And if ye will venture it, and be wicked, the Lord will come at an Hour when ye are not aware, and will cut you asunder, and give you your Portion with Unbelievers. Be resolute in this. *Stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.* Jam. 5. 8.

3. Expect no Favour at his Hands, till ye are qualified for it, according to his Gospel: He hath no Commission to grant you Mercy, but upon those Terms; will not pardon, but as ye are penitent; or save, but as ye are Believers; or bless, but as ye are Obedient and

Artic. IV. Faithful. Do not then flatter your selves in Sin, in Expectation of his Compassion; for though he is your Saviour, he must be just; though he is the Son of Man, he must judge righteously: And if ye have not repented nor reformed, ye shall perish in your Sins. *The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance of those that know not God, and obey not the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

2 Theff. 1.7.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE V.

ACTS V. Latter Part of the 4th Verse.

Thou hast not lied unto Men, but unto God.

Revelation must determine, what we ought to believe concerning God: And as that asserts the Divinity of the Son, it maintains the Divinity of the Holy Ghost. For after St. Peter had charged *Ananias* with Lying to the Holy Ghost, he adds, **Thou hast not lied unto Men, but unto God.** Shewing that the Holy Ghost is God.

Upon which I shall explain the Fifth Article, which declares, that
 "The Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of
 "One Substance, Majesty, and Glory with the Father and the
 "Son, Very and Eternal God".

I. The Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Father and the Son.

II. Is of One Substance, Majesty, and Glory, with the Father and the Son.

III. He is Very and Eternal God.

I. The Holy Ghost, or Spirit of God proceedeth from the Father and the Son. This is of that Moment, that nothing but Scripture can or may confirm it. For we know nothing of the Nature of the Holy Trinity, but as it is discovered to us from above; and we are bound to receive and believe that Discovery which God makes of himself, as properest for our Understandings to receive, and for the Spirit to reveal. We are not left in this Case to Reason or Fancy, to start up or fix what Notions we please concerning God, or to represent him in our own Way; for our Reason cannot inform us exactly, what is the Nature of a Worm, or of our selves, much less can it positively conclude concerning the Nature of the most High God. We find we are short in Contemplation here, and can know nothing that lies beyond our Reach, but as he is pleas'd to inform us, or condescends to describe it familiarly and fairly to us: And as he is Goodness and Truth it self, we need not doubt, but that when he undertakes to describe himself as he is, he will do it with that Plainness, that is agreeable to our Understandings; because he will not deceive his Creatures with false Ideas, or represent himself to them, otherwise than what he is. For such a Description would doubtless fix and promote false Notions upon the Minds of Men, and for ever lead them into Mistakes concerning himself.

Artic. V.

When therefore the Holy Scriptures declare that there are Three Persons in the Holy Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, we need not question the Reality of it. For since God who knows himself best, condescends to describe himself in that Manner; we may well entertain the Description, and acquiesce in it, as the best we can receive; because given by him, who alone is able to give a perfect Account of himself, and to fit the Discovery he makes to the Shortness of our Understandings; and since our little Capacities are so streighten'd and limited, that we cannot bear a better, we should not carp at the Revelation, or quarrel with it, as contradictory to Reason, and not fit to be received; but should rather own the Weakness of our Understandings, to which it is fitted. For since God gave it, we may be sure that it is the most that we can as yet know of the Nature of the Deity. Thus when it is also asserted, That the Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Father and Son; though we are as much at a Loss to describe how the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and Son, as to describe how the Son is the begotten of the Father; yet we ought to think it reasonable to approve of, or consent to such Descriptions, when we meet with Expressions in Scripture, which import and signify the same Thing.

I confess it was and is a great Controversy between the *Western* and *Grecian* Churches, Whether the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son. For the *Grecian* Church freely acknowledges, that he proceedeth from the Father, but will not allow that he proceedeth from the Son. But the *Latin* or *Western* Church is of the contrary Persuasion, and will have it, that he proceedeth from the Father and the Son. But if we have recourse to the Scriptures to decide the Dispute, in my Apprehension, so far as I can see, the Controversy is about Words: It is plainly expressed, that the Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Father; and so far the *Grecian* Church is in the right; but in the same Verse it is expressed, that the Son will send him: The Words are these; *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.* Now if the sending from the Son, and proceeding from the Father is or signifies the same Thing, there is no Cause of Difference between the Two Churches; for in common Signification he that is sent from the Son, proceedeth from the Person of the Son that sends him, as well as he proceedeth from the Father. But lest we should too nicely insist upon Procession from the Father, as including somewhat more than bare Mission, as the *Grecians* explain it, the Holy Spirit is not only represented as sent by the Son, but as receiving of his, partaking from him, which is but another Phrase for Proceeding. *He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shew it unto you.* For this Reason, as the Son is thus said to send the Holy Ghost, our Church declares her Sentiments in this Article, and owns the Holy Ghost, as proceeding from the Father and the Son; because coming from Father and Son, and sent from Father and Son, which for ought we know, may be but another Expression, which denotes proceeding from Father and Son. *For he shall receive of mine, and shew it unto you.*

John 15. 26.

John 16. 14.

II. The

II. The Holy Ghost is here represented as equal to the Father and Son, of One Substance, Majesty and Glory ; of the same Essence, Power, and Honour ; that is, the Almighty God. This is to be known by Revelation only ; and therefore it is but reasonable and proper, that those Places of Scripture should be produc'd, which prove thus much ; that all of you may see the Foundation our Church proceeds upon.

1. The Holy Ghost is of One Substance with the Father and the Son, of the same Essence and Deity with them. For by Substance we intend that spiritual Essence, by which they are God. This is plainly intended by our Lord, when he commands his Apostles to "go and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost". For as Persons baptiz'd are received under the divine Government, in whose Name they are received into the Church ; the Holy Ghost is placed in the same Quality and Authority with the Father and Son ; and consequently must be of the same Substance and Essence, and as much Divine as Father and Son. But this is more plainly declared by St. John, when he says, that the Holy Ghost is one with the Father, and one with the Son ; for he does not say, that "these Three agree in One", as he said of "the Spirit, the Water, and Blood" ; but he expressly declares, that these Three, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are One ; which must be One in Substance, Essence, and Deity. And this Text St. Cyprian mentions before there was Occasion to corrupt it. *For there are Three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these Three are One.* 1 Joh. 5. 7.

2. The Holy Ghost is of the same Majesty and Glory with the Father and Son, of the same Power and Wisdom, Goodness and Truth, Dominion and Sovereignty with them : The Attributes of the Divinity are given to him as being God, equal with the Father and Son ; and he is to be pray'd to, and rely'd upon, ador'd and worshipped, feared and obey'd, as One with them. Thus St. Peter ascribes to him the Power of searching the Heart, and discovering the very Secrets of it, which is an Attribute peculiar to God : Peter said to Ananias, *Why hath Satan filled thy heart, to lye to the Holy Ghost ?* He said to Sapphira, *How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord ?* How was it possible for the Holy Ghost to have searched and found out these Persons in their Sin, and to have enabled the Apostle to tell them of it, to reveal it plainly unto them, and to condemn them to die ; and upon St. Peter's Word to slay them upon the Spot ; if he had not been of the same Majesty and Glory with the Father and Son ; of the same Power and Dominion ; if he knew not the Heart, searched not the Thoughts, and had not Power to condemn and execute ? This particular Judgment is Proof sufficient, that he is of One Majesty and Glory. But when the Day of Pentecost was come, he gave undeniable Proof of his Majesty and Glory ; for the Disciples were then filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with Tongues as the Spirit gave them Utterance ; and who but God himself of infinite Majesty and

Artic. V.

Psal. 139. 7,
8, 9, 10.

and Glory, could enable illiterate Men to speak in those Tongues, which they never learnt, or heard of before. He is also represented by the *Psalmist* as present every where; for let him go where he could, it was impossible to go from the Spirit, or to conceal himself from his Eye; and therefore he must be of equal Majesty and Glory with the Father; it being an Essential Attribute of the Deity to be every where, and in all Places at one and the same Time. *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there; If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the earth, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.*

III. The Holy Ghost is Very and Eternal God; Very God, or in Truth the True God, not a Nominal, but Real God; not as Magistrates and Princes are called Gods, invested with Authority for a Time, but as truly God who knows the Heart, and as really God who governs the World, as Father and Son: And he is Eternal God, or God Blessed forevermore; not a Divine Vertue, which proceedeth from God, and then ends; not a Divine Power which operates for a Time, in a wonderful Manner, and then ceases; but Eternal God, from Everlasting to Everlasting, who always was God, and will be the Living God for evermore. St. Peter sets this down as most certain, when he told *Ananias*, that he had not lied unto Men, but God. Thus it may be seen, that the Doctrine of our Church is Sound and Orthodox, the same which the Scriptures confirm, and which (as may be prov'd) the Catholick Church hath professed and held in all Ages, and to which all her genuine Sons may subscribe, and keep with a good Conscience. For She teaches the same Truths which the Apostles publish'd concerning the Holy Ghost, and the Scriptures confirm.

From this Account of the Article we may consider, what the Holy Ghost does for us, and what the Holy Ghost may expect from us.

I. This Holy Ghost is the Spirit of Holiness, and is sent forth by the Father, to promote and encourage Holiness among Men; which he does by revealing the Scriptures, by regenerating Christians, by assuring us of our Adoption, and by guiding us in our Conversations, that we may under his Assistance become *holy, as he is holy*.

1st, This Holy Spirit hath revealed the Scriptures, or inspired Men to pen down the Word and Will of God for our Instruction; that we might not be left to the wild Inventions of our own Brains, and the Deliriums of our own heated Imaginations. No Man knoweth the Things of God, but the Spirit of God, and he to whom the same Spirit reveals or discovers them. For this Purpose it was bestowed upon the Apostles and primitive Christians, in a very extraordinary Manner, bringing to their Remembrance all Things which Christ had said unto them, and giving them the Gifts of Tongues, that they might be enabled to publish the same over all the World; and by this Spirit they published all that was necessary to Salvation, de-

declar'd the whole Mind of God, and preach'd the Gospel, which is to remain as the only Rule for Practice, and for Judgment to the End of the World. As "Prophecy came not in old Time by the Will of Man, but holy Men spake as they were mov'd by the Holy Ghost": So the Apostles and Evangelists were not mov'd by their own Wills, or directed by their own Fancies, but spake and wrote as they were enabled by the Holy Ghost, that we might have the whole Will of God remaining by us, and every Generation might have recourse to their Writings for their Information and Safety. This wonderful Assistance of the Spirit remained in the Church, till the Canon of Scripture was settled, and the Scriptures were known sufficiently to be the unalterable Rule for Faith and Manners, and to be able to make us wise unto Salvation; and some time after. And then it gradually withdrew, and left the Church to the ordinary Influences of its Grace, and the Direction of the Holy Scriptures. *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.* Artic. V.
2 Tim. 3. 16, 17.

2. This Holy Spirit regenerates Christians, and enables them to live up to the Gospel. Our Lord says, "Except a Man be born of Water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven". And he has appointed us to be baptized with Water, that at the same time this Spirit may take Possession of our Souls, regenerate us by his Presence, produce the new Birth in us, and enable us (as we grow up) to live as Christ hath commanded. For this Reason Baptism is called the Laver of Regeneration, and we are look'd upon, when baptiz'd, as born again of Water and of the Spirit. After this the Spirit looks upon Christians as his Possession and Care. And as "the Lord open'd the Heart of Lydia, that she attended to the Words that were spoken of Paul": So the Spirit clears our Understandings, and guides them to the Truth, and he makes his Servants a willing People in the Day of his Power; he applies the most effectual Motives to sway and incline our Wills, that we may approve of the Things that are excellent. And as our Affections are to be taken from the Earth, and to be fix'd on Things above; the Holy Ghost moves in our Hearts, raises up our Desires, wins us to our Lord, and engages us heartily to live as God commands: And then, when we are led by the Spirit to the Word, and to our Duty, we are the Children of God, and shall not fall into Condemnation. *There is therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.* Rom. 8. r.

3. The Holy Ghost assures us of our Adoption, and that we are own'd for the Sake of Jesus, and dealt with as Children. In those miraculous Times, when the Holy Ghost wrought so wonderfully in the Church, it did without doubt testify to those that were sincere and faithful, that they were the Children of God; and gave them undoubted Proofs of their Acceptance above, whereby they were sealed to the Day of Redemption. But in our Days, now those extraordinary Assistances are withdrawn, we can expect no such Assurance of our Adoption, but in an ordinary Way, in the use of
F Means,

Artic. V. Means, and an entire Submission to the Scriptures. And if we really find, that we have been led by the Spirit of God, as it speaks to us out of the Scripture; that we have, through its Assistance, and the Direction of the Word, mortified the Deeds of the Body; we may conclude from thence, that we are the Children of God; may rely upon the Word, that we are adopted and blessed as Children, and may hope for the Rewards of Sons. And when our Consciences thus bear us Witness, that we have truly feared God, and the Scripture confirms this Persuasion, the Spirit of God assures us in an ordinary Manner, that we are the Children of God; and if Children, then Heirs. *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.* And as many as now-a-days are led by the Word, or Scripture, are led by the Spirit of God: For the Spirit now speaketh to us by the Word, and in it. And therefore such as are so led, are the Sons of God. *The Spirit it self beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the Sons of God.*

Rom. 8. 14, 16.

2d. 1. 1. 1.

4. The Spirit doth guide us in holy Conversations, and enables us to perfect Holiness in the Fear of God, to abound in every thing that is good and excellent. Of our selves, in our natural State, we are insufficient for these Things, being Enemies to God, and his Goodness; but through the Directions of the Scriptures, and the Assistances of this Spirit, we are enabled to walk in the Ways of God, to keep his Commandments, to work out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling, and to make our Calling and Election sure. For 'tis through his Concurrence, that we know and practise our Duties, that we mortify the Deeds of the Flesh, crucify the Old Man, become new Creatures, and walk in Newness of Life. When we do thus, we are said to live in the Spirit, and to walk in the Spirit; that is, we then behave our selves as those, that conform themselves to the Word of God, which was reveal'd by the Spirit; and as those that obey the ordinary and godly Motions of it, by which it guides the Mind, the Will, and the Affections into Righteousness: And in this Sense we are always led by the Spirit, when we read the Word, and by the Assistance of the Spirit endeavour to live up to what we read, that the Scriptures may be our Rule and Guide unto Death. *For they that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh: but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.*

Rom. 8. 5.

II. As the Spirit thus leads us into all Truth, and prepares us for a better Place, we should consider what this Holy Ghost may expect from us, as we are Christians, and under the Direction of the Scriptures, and the Influence of his Grace; and what he expects, may concern our Minds, and Will, and Affections, our Bodies, and our Conversations.

1st, This Holy Spirit, which thus assists us, may justly expect from us a constant Compliance with his Motions, as raised up by the Word; and may look for an Entertainment and Obedience, according as he doth assist us. That our Understandings may be open and ready to receive the Word, and those Directions which are offered to our

our Thoughts, that our Wills may yield to his Will, and comply with every Motion, which leads to Holiness and Righteousness; and that our Affections should be always ready to covet, admire, love, and pursue what is commanded. This the Holy Spirit may expect from all of us, as we are put under his Tuition and Government, committed to his Care and Management, appointed to be obedient to him in all Things. It must therefore be very offensive, when his Motions are quench'd and suppress'd, when his Assistances are slighted and despis'd, and the Convictions he raises up are turn'd off and neglected; nay, it must needs grieve the Holy Spirit, by which we are seal'd to the Day of Redemption, and brought to the saving Knowledge of Christ, to find us ignorant and heedless, harden'd in Heart, and obstinate in Sin, stifled in our Vices, and Proof against all the Application that he had made to rescue and save us. Consider therefore what Returns ye have made for his Kindness, and quench his Holy Flames no more; be no more averse to those Convictions, that he sets home to your Souls, but be obedient that ye may be happy. *Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will bear his voice, harden not your hearts?* Artic. VI. Heb. 3. 7, 8.

2dly, As your Souls and Bodies are sanctify'd by him, he may justly demand the Service of both, and may expect that your Bodies should be preserv'd in a pure and holy Condition; that they may not be disorder'd by any Excess, over-strain'd by any Intemperance, and may especially be preserv'd in Purity and Chastity before him: That as your Bodies are his Temple, in which he is to dwell and command; they may not be made an unfit Habitation for him by any Excess, or any Uncleanneſs; but may be always guarded by you with Care, preserv'd in Purity, and may be a meet Habitation for the Holy Spirit of God; that your Minds may be serene, your Wills holy, your Affections pure, and Body and Soul may be preserv'd in Holiness to the Coming of the Lord. *What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?* 1 Cor. 6. 19.

3. He may look for an holy Conversation from us, and expect that our Lives should answer our Profession, and his Presence; for we are consecrated to the Service of Christ, and devoted to every Thing that is good. As the Mind and Will are under the Influence of the Holy Ghost, our Actions should be good and holy, proper for us to perform, and the Holy Spirit to guide. As therefore we desire to answer his Expectations, and to concur with his Assistances, we ought to forsake every evil Way, to abstain from all Appearances of Evil; that we may walk as the Sons of God, and as under the Assistances of the Holy Ghost; we may not allow our selves in that which looks ill, or take those Liberties that are but suspicious; but should watch our Words and Actions, that they may be agreeable to the Rule we pretend to walk by, and conformable to his Assistance, whose Part it is to make us Holy. How shall we do an ill Thing,

Artic. V.

1 Pet. i. 16.

and sin against God! How can we do that which is forbidden, and grieve the Holy Spirit! Let us rather deny our selves, take up our Cross, submit to any Inconveniencies, than offend this Holy Guide, pollute our Consciences and our Lives: And as He which called us is holy, so let us be holy in all our Conversations; that it may appear by what we do, that we belong to an holy God, and are guided by his Holy Spirit. *Because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy.*

ARTICLE

He may look for an holy Conversation from us, and expect that we should answer our Profession and his Presence; for we are consecrated to the Service of Christ, and devoted to every Thing that is good. As the Mind and Will are under the Influence of the Holy Spirit, so the Tongue should be good and holy; proper for use to glorify God, and the Holy Spirit to guide. As therefore we desire to answer the expectations, and to conform with his Assistance, we ought to speak every word, to abstain from all Approaches of Evil, that we may walk as the Sons of God, and as under the Eye of the Holy Ghost; we may not allow our lives in that which looks ill, or the loose Liberties that are not edifying, but should be good Words and Actions, that they may be agreeable to the Word of God, and conformable to his Assistance, which is to make us Holy. How shall we do all this?

ARTICLE VI.

2 TIM. III. First Part of the 16th Verse.

All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God.

AFTER the Ascension of our Lord into Heaven, it was necessary that we should have those Directions of his Holy Spirit penn'd down, which might be a standing Rule for the Church to walk by: And **All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God** for that Purpose; "and is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness, that the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good Works".

I shall explain the Sixth Article of our Church, which declares, That "Holy Scripture containeth all Things necessary to Salvation. So that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any Man, that it should be believed as an Article of Faith, or be thought requisite unto Salvation. In the Name of the Holy Scriptures we understand those Canonical Books of the Old and New Testament, of whose Authority was never any Doubt in the Church". Upon which consider,

- I. That Holy Scripture contains all Things that are necessary to Salvation.
- II. That whatsoever is not to be read therein, nor may be prov'd thereby, is not to be required of any Man, that it should be believed as an Article of Faith, or be thought requisite unto Salvation.
- III. In the Name of the Holy Scriptures, we understand the Canonical Books of the Old and New Testament, of whose Authority was never any Doubt in the Church.
- IV. The other Books (as *St. Jerom* saith) the Church doth read for Example of Life, and Instruction of Manners; but yet doth not apply them to stablish any Doctrine, such are *Apopocrypha*.
- V. All the Books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive, and account for Canonical, or for the Rule of Faith and Manners.

I will explain these a little, that we may know the Sentiments of our Excellent Church.

I. Holy Scripture containeth all Things that are necessary to Salvation: All that is to be believed or practised in order to get to Heaven;

Artic. VI. Heaven ; as they are revealed by the Holy Spirit, who knows what is necessary for us in this mortal State ; they are represented as “ profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness ; that the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good Work ”. And if they can make the Christian perfect, they must contain every Particular that is necessary to Salvation, and answer every Exigency in our Christian Warfare. We know of no Promise of Mercy and Forgiveness, but what is here mentioned, of no Threatning of Wrath or Damnation, but what is herein recorded, of no Christian Duties, but what are here commanded, and of no Proceedings in the Day of Judgment, but what are herein specified ; of no Heaven, and the Joys of it, but what are here described ; and of no Hell, and the terrible Torments of it, but what are here exposed. And therefore the Scriptures must contain all that is necessary for us to know, believe, or practise.

But admit that some should pretend, that they are defective, and do not contain all necessary Truths. I must desire them to consider, that if they do not, it must be, because God either could not cause all that was necessary to be penn'd down, or would not. If they say he could not, then how can he inspire them at this Time to deliver what they say is necessary ; for he could as easily inspire the Apostles as them ? Or how could he deliver by Tradition that which is necessary ? For he might as easily cause it to be penn'd down, that it might remain in Writing, as speak it, that it might continue in the Church by Tradition. There is no doubt therefore to be made, but God could inspire Men with the Knowledge of all that is necessary, and cause them to write it down for our Admonition. If he could do this, and would not, then how can that be necessary, which he never revealed ; or how can he make us accountable for that, which we never received ? As he imparted no more than what the Scripture contains, he thought that sufficient, and we can be accountable for no more. For we cannot think that necessary, which was never revealed, or our selves responsible for that which we never received. It follows therefore, that the Holy Scriptures contain all that is necessary to Salvation, and that we need not give heed to the Fancy of some, who say they speak as they are moved by the Holy Ghost ; or to the Tradition of others, who pretend to supply the Defects of Scripture by their Tradition. For the Scriptures are in that Sense perfect, containing all Things necessary to make us wise unto Salvation. *From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

2 Tim. 3. 15.

II. Whatsoever is not read in the Scripture, nor can be proved thereby, is not to be required of any Man, that it should be believed as an Article of Faith, or be thought requisite unto Salvation. For if there be no Bounds set to Faith, and we can never tell when we are furnished with all that is necessary to Salvation, we may fancy, we believe a-right now, and soon after may have a new Creed obtruded upon us, and may presume that that is necessary, which may be

be counted superfluous: And whilst we think we are establish'd upon the Apostles Doctrine, may be alarm'd on one Hand by a new Light, on the other Hand, by Tradition; as if we were in the wrong, and wanted their Directions to set us right. Upon this Consideration it is but fit, that we should have a Rule before us, to distinguish Truth from Falshood; and according to the unanimous Consent of the Church, the Scriptures are that Rule, by which our Faith and our Manners are to be directed and governed. And for this Reason whatever is offer'd to us as an Article of Faith, or Rule of Life, which is not in direct Terms contain'd in the Scriptures, or cannot by fair Consequences be proved from thence, to belong to Faith or a Christian Life, must be judged to be counterfeit and false, because not contain'd expressly in, or fairly prov'd from the grand Touchstone, or Rule for such Points, the Holy Scriptures: And whatsoever is pretended to, or requir'd to be done, which the Scriptures do not allow of, or give us Liberty in, must not be counted necessary to Salvation, though it carries the Commendation of great Names with it, and in these last Days will pass for Spiritual Light, or true Catholick Tradition. For the Scriptures are the Rule which God has reveal'd and given; and what agrees with those, he consents we should believe and hold fast: But what differs, or is contrary to them, he encourageth us to reject, and cast away, though an Angel from Heaven should preach and recommend it: For as he never revealed, authorized, or approved of it, all the artful Pretences of Men, whether moved by Learning or Enthusiasm, can never put a real Necessity upon it. *But though we, or an Angel from Heaven* Gal. 1. 8. *preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.*

III. By the Scriptures we understand the Canonical Books of the Old and New Testament, of whose Authority was never any Doubt in the Church, of which the Church never entertain'd any considerable Doubt, or was never at a Loss to find out and prove the Reality and authentick Copies of them. For we cannot but think when the Church sought for, and enquired after the Canon of the Scripture, there might arise many Scruples concerning the Truth of some Parts of it, as particularly concerning St. James's Epistle, the Revelations, and others; and indeed how could it happen otherwise, when Search was made after the true and genuine Copies of the Apostles Epistles? The Enquiry then was in the Churches, what such an Apostle wrote, to whom, by whom, and at what Time. What the concurrent Testimony of Christians esteem'd real, of what Authority and Force they were amongst them, and how every Part agreed, and harmoniz'd with the common Principles of Religion taught by the Apostles; and with other genuine and undoubted Epistles. How was it possible for these Enquiries to be resolved, without examining all that could be alledg'd against them, or answering all those Doubts and Scruples that might arise concerning them, without questioning the Probability or Likelihood of some Pieces, rejecting the Counterfeit, and admitting and approving of the Genuine?

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Artic. VI.

The meaning therefore of our Church in this Article must be, that those Books of the Old and New Testament are counted Canonical, of which there never was any considerable Doubt amongst *Jews* or *Christians*, which might suspend the Belief of any rational Person, or cause him to pay no Deference to any Tract or Tracts therein contain'd. As for the Old Testament, the several Books contain'd in it, have been so accurately preserv'd by the *Jews*, and so generally attested by all Ages, that they were never much doubted of: And as to the Books of the New, though some Epistles have been scrupled, yet the concurrent Approbation of the first Ages, and the unanimous Acceptance of the Ages succeeding, have silenc'd all Doubts, and approved of their Canon: And to satisfy us concerning their Authority, we are as morally certain that those Books were written by Men inspired by the Holy Ghost, as we can be at this Distance of Time, without seeing those Miracles wrought, which were then seen and known to be done for the Demonstration and Confirmation of the Faith contained in them. The Names of the Books of the Old and New Testament, are annex'd to the Article, and agreeable to that Number which the Bible contains. And as the Worthies which collected this Canon, were sensible of the Curse that was pronounced against any that preached another Gospel, we may be sure they would admit of no suspicious or counterfeit Pieces into the Canon, for fear of incurring that dreadful Curse: *As we said before, so say I again, If any man preach any other Gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.*

Gal. 1. 9.

IV. The other Books (as St. *Jerom* saith) the Church doth read for Example of Life, and Instruction of Manners; yet doth it not apply them to stablish any Doctrine, or alledge them, as we do other Scriptures, to prove any Article of Faith, or to warrant any Principle of our Religion. By those other Books we understand the *Apocryphal*, out of which our Church appoints some particular Lessons, upon the same Account as they were read in St. *Jerom's* Time, for Example of Life, and Instruction of Manners; but with no Intent to encourage any Doctrine, or license any strange Fancies, which may be drawn from thence: She never equals them to the Canon of Scripture; but as she allows them to be bound up in your Bibles with the Scriptures, she permits you to read them for your Edification, and no otherwise; for she plainly distinguisheth between the Authority of Scriptures, and their Authority. And as we fix Articles of Faith, and Things necessary to Salvation, upon the Scriptures; we do not allow any Part of the *Apocrypha* a casting Voice in the Establishment of any Doctrine. So that we read them as good Books, which (as it happens) may do good amongst Men; but yet such as must be received with some Grains of Allowance for those Mistakes and Errors, which all Books are subject to, which are not written by the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Our Church therefore deserves not those black and unkind Reflections that are cast upon her, for reading Part of these Books: For she does not look upon them, or commend them as the Word of God; she places no deciding

ciding Authority upon them, she applies none of their Texts to establish any Doctrine, she does not esteem them as Canonical; the most she values them for, is, that they are Ecclesiastical, and treat of the Affairs of the Church; and are in many Places serviceable to promote a good Life, and as proper to be read in a Congregation, as some Men's Sermons.

V. All the Books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive, and account for Canonical, or for our Christian Rule of Faith and Manners, according to the Number of Books, which Christians in all Ages have consented to, and agreed in; which begin with the Four Gospels, and end with the Revelations: These we allow and own as the most exact and perfect Canon of the Christian Religion; which we Christians are bound especially to frame our Faith and Conversations by: And all other Principles, Opinions, Canons, or Rules, that have been publish'd in the Beginning of Christianity, or since, which are contradicted by this Book, or by any plain Text contain'd therein, are of no Authority, or Force, or Power. For whom shall we obey, or whom are we bound to follow? The Living God speaking to us by his Son in the Scriptures; or Man, presuming Man, dictating to us out of the Scriptures? Whilst we hearken to God, and obey his Will, as the Scriptures declare it, we are safe; for he cannot and will not deceive us by his Son, and Holy Spirit. But if we leave the Scriptures, and give heed to Fancy or Imagination, to the Pride and Ambition of Men, or to a deluding Spirit, we may wander and err for evermore. How can we mistake, when we attend to those Holy Men, who could have no Design to misguide us, and who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost?

Thus our Church, like the Primitive, directs you in this Article, to keep to the Scriptures as your Rule, and admit of nothing as necessary to Salvation that is not expressly, or by fair Consequence contain'd in them. And by this Account ye may observe, that since the withdrawing of the miraculous Operations of the Spirit, it is a great Happiness to have the Scriptures; that it is incumbent upon us to read, mark, learn, and inwardly to digest them; and our Duty to reject all modern Pretences to Revelation, which contradict the Scriptures; and that our Safety consists in an humble Obedience paid to the Scriptures.

As the Scriptures contain all Things necessary to Salvation, 'tis a great Happiness to enjoy them. We may thus learn to know the Lord, and serve him, may understand our respective Duties, and the Encouragements we have to perform them. Every one that can read, may there peruse the Will of God, and see what is required, and what must be done; what is promis'd, and may be relied upon; what is threaten'd, and must be avoided, as we value the Divine Favour and our own Peace. There is not a Family, but what may have a Bible in their own Mother-Tongue, not to be laid aside in Dust, to be used once a Week; but to be read daily with Care to all

Artic. VI.

2 Pet. i. 21;
latter Part.

2 Pet. i. 21;
latter Part.

Artic. VI. that are in it : That every one, Master, Child, and Servant, may know what their Eternal Happiness depends upon. For the Holy Ghost has inspired the Writers to speak in Plainness, what is necessary to Salvation ; and the Meanest may understand what is so written, as well as the Learned. This is an Happiness beyond all worldly Possessions. For what is Wealth without saving Knowledge, or this World without Mercy and Eternal Life ? Beyond Enjoyments ; for what is Pleasure, that vanisheth away, compared with that Felicity, which lasteth for ever ? This is such a Happiness as is not to be found in Roman Catholick Dominions ; for there the Scriptures are sealed up, kept in secret, conceal'd under an unknown Tongue, and hid from the People. Let us praise God for this Advantage, and pray to him that no Theists or Atheists, how presuming soever, may lessen or degrade it, or provoke God to withdraw it ; that Posterity may say to their Children, what St. Paul said to Timothy, *From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures.*

2 Tim. 3. 15,
first Part.

2. 'Tis incumbent upon us to Read, Mark, Learn, and inwardly Digest them ; to search them daily, and to examine, what God requires at our Hands. It is not fit, that so great an Advantage should be neglected, or the Opportunity of Reading and Hearing them lost. Search therefore, that ye may know the Value of your Souls, and that Eternal Life that is promised : Search and remember the Words of your Lord, and his Holy Spirit ; and do not read merely to talk of Scripture ; but read, that ye may practise what is commanded, and obey it with your whole Heart : Read it as an Holy Book, containing Holy Laws for an Holy Life ; that your Hearts may be renewed by the Grace that attends it, your Tempers may be changed, and your Lives conformable, and ye your selves may be ready for your Lord. "Receive with Meekness the ingrafted Word, which is able to save your Souls. *But be ye doers of the Word, and not bearers only, deceiving your own selves.*"

Jam. 1. 22.

3. It is our Duty to reject all modern Pretences to Revelation, or any Thing else which contradicts the Scripture. For as for Pretences to Revelation, when they plainly run counter to the Word of God, they may be but the Dreams of a Religious Fancy, the Deliriums of an heated Brain, or the Suggestions of an Evil Spirit : For the Holy Spirit of God will not contradict himself ; for he is Truth it self ; nor can he discover any other Gospel, than what he has reveal'd, or make void what he has published. He has declared already all that is necessary to Salvation ; and as he will not add to it, or diminish from it, we may reject all Additions as the Delusions of evil Men : And as to Tradition, which is employ'd by others, to warrant that which is not contained in the Word, we are under the same Obligation the Jews were, to reject all Traditions of what Nature soever, which contradict the plain Canon of the Scripture : For the Spirit would never deliver that by Word of Mouth, as Divine and Binding, which contradicts what it had deliver'd by inspired Men, and had caused to be written for our Instruction, to raise up the Elect. *In hope of the eternal life, which God that cannot lye, promised before the world began.*

Tit. 1. 2,

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4. Our Safety must consist in an humble Obedience to the Scriptures, in making those our constant Rule for Faith and Manners, or in Believing as they teach us to believe, and in Living as they command us to live. Thus doing we shall entitle our selves to the Promises of Grace and Mercy, and shall in this Life have Grace to help in the Time of Need, and in the World to come Life Everlasting. Let us then keep strictly to the Holy Scriptures, that we may be safe, and not as some do, divide the Flock of Christ; for that arises from their Mistakes in, and Misapplication of them. But as new born Babes, without Design or Hypocrisy, let us receive the sincere Milk of the Word, as it is plainly and fairly given to us, that we may grow and improve thereby: And in difficult Places, let us advise with the Sense of the Catholick Church, as convey'd to us by the Fathers, if we are able; if not, trust to them that are able, and will not deceive us. *Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envyings, and all evil-speaking, (which hinders the Word,) as new born babes, desire the sincere Milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby.*

1 Pet. 2. 1, 2.

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ARTICLE

ARTICLE VII.

I PET. I. 10.

Of which Salvation the Prophets have enquired, and searched diligently, who prophesied of the Grace that should come unto you.

AS Salvation is by Jesus Christ, and the Patriarchs and Prophets, before his Incarnation, believed in him, and were saved by him ; we may be sure, that the Old Testament is not contrary to the New : That under both Jesus is Lord and Christ, and the Saviour of all that put their Trust in him. For the same Salvation which we labour to obtain, the Prophets foretold. **Of which Salvation the Prophets have enquired, and searched diligently, who prophesied of the Grace that should come unto you.** Upon which I shall explain the Seventh Article, which says, " The Old Testament is not contrary to the New : Both in " the Old and New Testament Everlasting Life is offer'd to Man- " kind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and Man, " being both God and Man. Wherefore they are not to be heard, " which feign that the Old Fathers did look only for transitory Pro- " mises. Although the Law given from God by *Moses*, as touching " Ceremonies and Rites, does not bind Christian Men ; nor the Ci- " vil Precepts thereof ought of Necessity to be received in any Com- " monwealth ; yet notwithstanding, no Christian Man whatsoever " is free from the Obedience of the Commandments, which are cal- " led moral ".

I. The Old Testament is not contrary to the New : Both in the Old and New Testament Everlasting Life is offer'd to Mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and Man, being both God and Man.

II. They are not to be heard, who feign, that the Old Fathers did look only for Transitory Promises.

III. The Law given by *Moses*, touching Ceremonies and Rites, does not bind Christian Men ; nor the Civil Precepts thereof ought of Necessity to be receiv'd in any Commonwealth.

IV. No Christian Man whatsoever is free from the Obedience of the Commandments, which are called Moral.

I. The Old Testament is not contrary to the New ; for Salvati- on is offer'd to all Mankind by the Messias, which is Christ, who under both Testaments is the Mediator between God and Sinners ; and

and the properest for such an Office, being both God and Man, sufficient to plead with God, and to represent the deplorable State of lost Man to the Divine Mercy, The Agreement of the Old Testament with the New, consists chiefly in this, in that Everlasting Life may be discovered as attainable in Both, by Repentance and Faith in Christ: In the Old Testament this is set forth darkly and obscurely, under Shadows and Representations; but in the New plainly and openly; without any Concealment or Covering: But both lead to the Messias, and promise Salvation by him, and in the ultimate End, which centers in him, there is no Difference between them. The Old Testament propounds Christ to our Faith, by Promises, Types, and Prophecies, and thereby directs us to him as the Author of Salvation; but in the New He comes himself, and preaches the Gospel.

Artic.VII.

1st, The Old Testament mentions Christ in Promises. Thus our first Parents were inform'd, that "the Seed of the Woman should break the Serpent's Head". Which Seed is universally expounded of Christ, for we know of no other Born of a Woman, which could so powerfully deliver us from the Slavery of Satan, and destroy his Kingdom. It is said to Abraham, "In thy Seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed"; which can be no other than Christ Jesus the Son of David. For what Posterity of Abraham ever brought such a Blessing to Mankind, our Lord excepted? They were only capable of serving their Generations in their little Circumstances, but none could procure an universal Blessing for Men, such as every Individual upon Earth might partake of, and such as Christ purchased for all Nations at the Hands of his Father. Old Jacob could foretel that Shiloh should come, to whom the People should gather. "The Scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a Lawgiver from between his Feet, till Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the People be"; which is expounded of the Coming of Christ, who was incarnate when Herod reign'd, and Judah had lost the Kingdom. These Promises, and a great many more like them, must relate unto Jesus Christ our Lord, and were fulfilled in him; as the New Testament does particularely apply that Promise of Abraham to him: *Now to Abraham and his Seed were the Promises made; he saith not, and to seeds, as of many, but as of one, and to thy Seed, which is Christ. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and Heirs according to the Promise.*

Gal. 3. 16, 29.

2. The Old Testament offers Christ and Everlasting Life by him in Types and Representations: Thus pardon of Sin through his Blood was typify'd when the Sinner was forgiven upon the Oblation of a Sacrifice, and pouring out the Blood of it: When also the High-Priest went into the Holy of Holies, with the Blood of the Sacrifice, to appear before God, and to atone for himself and the People, he represented our Lord the true High-Priest: "Who after he had offer'd himself up once for all, ascended into Heaven by Vertue of his own Blood, to make Intercession for us". And when upon the Offering of an acceptable Sacrifice, the Offender was restored unto his former State in his civil Capacity, which he had forfeited by his Sin, and if a true Penitent, to the Divine Favour; our

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Artic. VII. Reconciliation to God by the Sacrifice of his Son, and his powerful Mediation was excellently set forth, by which we that were a-far-off, are made nigh by his Son, and upon our Amendment are entitled to Eternal Favour. These are explain'd in this Manner in the New Testament. *For if the blood of Bulls, and of Goats, and the Ashes of an Heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifyeth to the purifying of the Flesh,* according to the Old Testament, under which Purification was so perform'd: *How much more shall the Blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offer'd himself without Spot to God, purge your Conscience from dead works to serve the Living God?* And that we may know that in the New Testament the Blood was to purify, and our High-Priest was to enter into Heaven, it is added; *The heavenly things should be purified with better Sacrifices than these; for Christ is not enter'd into the holy Places made with hands, which are figures of the true; but into Heaven it self, now to appear in the Presence of God for us.*

Heb. 9. 13,
14, 23, 24.

3. The Old Testament offer'd Christ in Prophecies, by which the Blessings of the Gospel are as plainly set forth, as if the Prophets had beheld them with their bodily Eyes. *Isaiah* frequently and plainly sets forth the Happiness of Gospel-Times, and the great Reward of Eternal Life, which shall be given to those that fear God, and believe in the Messias: He informs us that our Lord's Message was to preach Deliverance to the Captive, to bring good Tidings to the Meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, to open the Prison to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable Year of the Lord, and (that we may be certain that the New Testament agrees with it) our Lord was pleased to read these Words to the People, to close the Book and to say, "This Day is this Scripture fulfilled in your Ears". That Prophet explains himself further, and not only declares that the Jews were to share in the Mercy of a Redeemer, but the Gentiles also were to be Fellow-Heirs with them. "The Glory of the Lord is risen upon thee, and the Gentiles shall come to thy Light, and Kings to the Brightness of thy Rising. The Forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee; the Isles shall wait for thee, and bring their Sons from far, to the Name of the Lord our God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorify'd thee". And this is the same which was said under the New Testament concerning Christ, that he was to be a "Light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the Glory of Israel". And St. Paul particularly cites this Prophet, to prove that in Christ the Gentiles were to trust: And that we might know what that Happiness was, which the Believers under the Old Testament expected, he tells us, "The Sun shall be no more thy Light by Day, neither for Brightness shall the Moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an Everlasting Light, and thy God thy Glory: And the Days of thy Mourning ending, thy People shall be all Righteous, they shall inherit the Land for ever". Which is a plain Representation of that new Heaven and new Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness, which the Gospel promises; and that Eternal Life, that shall then be enjoy'd, excellently describ'd: *And I saw no Temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty,*

Isa. 60. 1, 3,
5, 9, 19, 20,
21.

Revel. 21. 22,
23.

ty, and the Lamb are the Temple of it ; and the City had no need of the Sun, neither of the Moon to shine in it, for the Glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. Artic. VII.

II. They are not to be heard, who feign that the Old Fathers did look only for Transitory Promises ; " For if in this Life only they had Hope, they were of all Men most miserable ". For they met with no suitable Compensation, for all the Labour and Misery they underwent for the Cause of God. 'Tis acknowledg'd they had not such a clear Sight of the future State as we enjoy, or such a manifest Discovery of Eternal Life as we possess ; but they had some Hints, though shadowed, some Motives, though obscur'd ; they saw the Day approaching, though not clear Day ; and they knew that their Redeemer lived, though he kept at some Distance from them : Their Expectations were strong, though not so distinct ; and they had enough for themselves, though it seems small to us ; and by the Help of what they had, they were enabled to lead holy Lives, and to put their Souls in a Readiness for the Messiah. They liv'd by Faith beyond Sense, and had a better Place in their Eye, than the Land of Canaan : And though through Faith they obtain'd a good Report, they obtain'd not the Promise : God having provided some better Thing for us, that they, without us, should not be made perfect. There remaineth a Rest to the People of God, which they under the Old Testament, and we under the New, were appointed to enjoy together. Those died in Faith, not having obtain'd the Promises ; but having seen them a-far-off, were persuaded of the Truth of them, embrac'd them, and confess'd that they were Strangers and Pilgrims upon Earth, desiring a better Countrey ; that is, an Heavenly one ; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a City. So that they had the same Promises in Effect which we possess, and look'd beyond the Earth for Happiness. Those therefore are not to be heard who feign, that the Fathers under the Old Testament had no other than Transitory Enjoyments or Promises to depend upon : For had all those Worthies that wrought Righteousness, stopped the Mouths of Lions, quenched the Violence of Fire, had Trials of cruel Mockings and Scourgings, endur'd Bonds and Imprisonments, that were stoned, sawn asunder, tempted, afflicted, and tormented : Had they nothing but temporary Promises to trust to ? Were they so void of Sense, so stupid and rash, as to suffer all this, and lose their Lives for that which is Transitory and Fading ? Had Abraham nothing but Canaan in View ; Isah nothing but worldly Enjoyments in his Eye ; and all the Pious that died before the Coming of Christ, nought but Vanity before them, when they were so patient, so bold, and so innocent in their Sufferings ? Doubtless they looked beyond this mortal State, and breath'd after no less than Immortality and Glory. But to stop the Mouths of all those that pretend to assert, that the Fathers had only Transitory Promises, let them remember what our Saviour told the Jews, " Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have Eternal Life ". It was their full Thought and Persuasion, that they might obtain E-

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Artic. VII. ternal Life. They grounded this Belief upon some Passages in Scripture; they look'd beyond the Milk and Honey of Canaan, beyond their Temple and Sacrifices, and expected a far better Place of Rest and Fruition, than could be had below. And 'tis observable that our Lord does not discourage them from entertaining this Hope; he did not tell them, that their Promises were Temporal, or that their Canaan was but Temporal, but he commands them to search the Scriptures, in them ye think ye have an Account of Eternal Life; and they are they which testify of me, and promise that Eternal Life unto you, which I will give. So that he in Effect encourages and confirms them in this Persuasion, that the Scriptures will shew them the way to Eternal Life. *Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have Eternal Life, and they are they which testify of me.*

John 5. 39.

III. Not the Law given by Moses, touching Rites and Ceremonies, nor the Civil Precepts thereof, ought of necessity to be receiv'd in any Commonwealth; for they were fitted to the Temper of the Jews, and were not only in some respect Typical, but serviceable to keep them in Duty and Subjection to the Civil Power; and though their Laws and State Maxims are very considerable and weighty, there is no Necessity laid upon any People to live by them. They may, if they please, adapt and fit what Laws they please to their own liking, which Moses hath publish'd; and they are at Liberty to cast them aside. Nevertheless it hath been observ'd, that most Nations in their Laws have proceeded according to the Justice and Equity of the Jews, and have taken some or other of them into their Constitution. For as they were of God's Appointment, who knows best the Tempers of Men, they must carry with them the soundest Reason for their Establishment. So true is that of Moses; *For what Nation is there so great, that hath Statutes and Judgments so righteous, as all this Law which I set before you this day?*

Deut. 4. 8.

IV. No Christian Man whatsoever is free from the Obedience of the Law, or of those Commandments which we call Moral: For they are so natural and agreeable to sound Reason, that they cannot be reversed without supplanting our very Natures: Nevertheless God hath under the Gospel relax'd and abated so much of the Rigor of this Law, that upon our Repentance we may be forgiven, if we happen to transgress the same, provided we sincerely endeavour to keep it ever after. For the Gospel hath taken in all Moral Laws, and enforces the Obligation to keep and observe them to the utmost of our Power, and according to the Grace that is given to us, under the severe Penalty of Damnation. Our Saviour in his Sermon commands us to observe them, and enforces the Observation of them by his own Authority. *You have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt not kill; but I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his Brother without a Cause, &c.* To convince us, that under the Gospel the moral Laws are in Force, and oblige the Conscience; and that whatever Medium is found out to excuse our Conformity to it, is inconsistent with Reason.

Reason and the Commands of our Lord. *Think not that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.* Artic. VII. *Match. 5. 17.*

From this Account of the Article, it is clear, that God, since the Fall, has design'd to train up Men for Everlasting Life; that such as declare that the *Jews* had only Temporary Promises, are deceiv'd; that the Moral Law is still in Force, and that whosoever subscribes to this Article, and are *Antinomians*, are self-condemn'd; and that as the Old and New Testament agree in Christ, we should live rather better than the Fathers before the Incarnation of Christ.

1st, It is clear, (let vain Men pretend what they will) that since the Fall, God has design'd to train up Men for Everlasting Life: He discovered his Intentions soon after the Fall, and hath ever since by little and little reveal'd his Mind; that if Men would amend and grow better, he would remove them from this mortal State to Immortality and Glory. This is evident to all that will search the Scriptures, and consider what God hath reveal'd; whatever other Discoveries he may have made to the Patriarchs, that are not mentioned therein. Can it be thought, that God would make Man so Rational, that he might die, and be no more; or that he would separate a Family, and bless it to a Nation, meerly to give it a pleasant Countrey, when other Nations enjoy'd as good or better, without such Designation; or that he would raise up a Temple and Service, appoint Sacrifices and Expiations, send Holy Men and Prophets, for no other Reason but to feed them with Milk and Honey? Such Thoughts lessen the Majesty of the Great God, and cast an unseemly Reflection upon his Government. He must design some greater End in all that Preparation of a People, which could be no less than the Preparation of them for another World; according to that which *St. John* says, *And this is the Promise that he hath promised us, even Eternal Life.* 1 Joh. 2. 25.

2. Such who declare that the *Jews* had only Temporary Promises, are deceiv'd, according to the Sentiments of our Church: They only fancy or feign such a Thing, be they who they will, never so Rational in other Points, or Rabbinical in their Theories, never so Theistical in their Sentiments, or Atheistical at the Bottom; for if they would by such Suggestions dishonour the Government of God, and represent the Calling and Separation of *Abraham's* Family as a very Trifle, they do but impose upon themselves. For God from the Beginning design'd to train up Men first; and after that, the *Jews* in Hopes of another World; and the Worthies in those Days were so fully satisfied in the Truth of his Promises, that they chose to suffer any Thing, the Loss of Estate, Limbs, and Life, rather than lose their Interest in such a Promise. And can it be thought, that Men so Wise and Good as *Abraham, Moses, David, Isaiab*, and others, would carefully prepare themselves for that which never was likely to be, which they had no Grounds to believe, and they vainly expected? This appears so idle in its self, so ridiculous and irrational,

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Artic. VII. that we may be sure those good Souls had sufficient Grounds to believe another World, and to prepare solemnly for the Happiness of it; and that whoever they are, that talk of Transitory Promises, they deceive themselves, and there is no Truth in them. *These all having obtained a good report through Faith, received not the Promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.*

Heb. II. 39,
40.

3. The Moral Law is still in Force, binds the Conscience of all of us, and as we are Christians, we must endeavour to live up to it. 'Tis true, perfect Obedience is not expected from us, because the Gospel hath purchas'd a Relaxation, and an Allowance will be made for necessary Infirmities, and surprizing Trials: But nevertheless it is our Duty to abstain from all Appearance of Evil, to do good, and, as much as in us lies, to conform our selves to the Laws of the Gospel, which are Moral, binding Laws, and without which we cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. We must not think, because our Lord is willing to pardon Sin, that we may sin wilfully; or because he does not require unfinning Obedience, that we may upon Occasion transgress. "Be not deceived, whatsoever a Man sows, that shall he also reap; and he that sows to the Flesh, shall of the Flesh reap Corruption. The Fruits of the Spirit are Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance; against such there is no Law". Because these are Moral and Christian Vertues, which the Gospel enjoins, and hath promis'd to reward: We must therefore become Holy as God is Holy, Righteous as God is Righteous; and may not fancy, that because we are under Grace, we may be wicked. Our Lord says,

Marth. 5. 20.

I say unto you, that except your Righteousness shall exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

4. Whoever subscribes to this Article, and are *Antinomians*, or against the Moral Law, are self-condemned. For the Article says expressly, That no Christian Man whatsoever is freed from the Obedience of the Commandments, which are called *Moral*: And it is manifest that they teach otherwise; and therefore their Subscriptions and their Discourses are contradictory to one another: For if the Moral Commandments still bind us to Obedience, they teach falsely who say, that they are under no such Laws. And I mention this the rather, because if I may credit some printed Cases, there are some Independent Congregations, whose Pastors, by the Act of Toleration, are oblig'd to subscribe this Article, and do subscribe it; who nevertheless are *Antinomians*, and preach up the Invalidity of the Moral Law. Let such see how they can reconcile this Article and their Doctrine. *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that Grace may abound? God forbid.*

Rom. 6. 1, 2.

5. As the Old and New Testament agree in Christ, we should live rather better than the Fathers, who were before the Incarnation

of Christ. For our Lord hath been amongst us, and hath taught us with his own Lips; he hath set the Light of the Gospel plainly before us, and shewn us in expresse Terms what he expects from us: And certainly the more the Talents are, the more is required; the greater and clearer the Light, the holier should be our Hearts, and the more vertuous our Lives. But it must be own'd to our Shame, that we fall very short of the Excellency of some Jews, that liv'd before the Incarnation of the Son of God, who had not the Advantages we enjoy: And this will be our Shame and Confusion in the great Day; for had they seen and known as much as we, they might have gone beyond themselves in Piety, and have been greater Examples in Religion: Whilst some of us, that know so much, continue in our Sins, and hate to be reformed. *And that servant, which knew his Lord's Will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his Will, shall be beaten with many stripes.*

Artic. VII.



Luke 12: 47.

THESE are no doubts to be made, but the Apostles delivered a Form of sound Words, concerning Faith and Piety, to them Converts: by which they were to retain the Truth, and discover the Pretences of vain Men. Such a Form our Apostle delivered into Timothy, which he commanded him to hold fast, in Opposition to any Decayers. This last, the Form of sound Words, which thou hast heard of me, in which was kept, is the chief thing.

Upon this I will consider the Roman Article, which says, "The Three Creeds, Nicene Creed, Athanasian Creed, and that which is commonly called the Apostles Creed, ought thoroughly to be received and believed; for they may be proved by well certain Writings of Holy Scripture."

I. The Three Creeds ought thoroughly to be received and believed.

II. The Reason why they are to be received, is because they contain the substance of the Holy Scriptures.

ARTICLE 2

I. The Three Creeds, the Apostles, Nicene, and Athanasian, ought to be received and believed. I shall declare shew, that the Apostles delivered a Form of sound Words to their Converts; that the Creed, which we call the Apostles Creed, was in all likelihood the Creed which they delivered; that upon the Rule of always the Nicene Creed, which the Council of Nice published, was an acknowledgment of the position of the Apostles; and that the Athanasian Creed was published by Athanasius in the Time of his Exile, to new the Nicene Creed.

IV. That the Apostles did deliver a Form of sound Words to their Converts, to be remembered by them, is quite doubtless. Which they sometimes term the One Faith, the Rule they are to walk by, or the Depositum, or that which was committed to their Trust, or the first Principles of the Oracles of God; sometimes the Foundation of the Apostles, which they laid and built upon; and sometimes the

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ARTICLE VIII.

Hold fast the Form of sound Words, which thou hast heard of me, in Faith and Love, which is in Christ Jesus.

THERE is no doubt to be made, but the Apostles delivered a Form of sound Words, concerning Faith and Practice, to their Converts ; by which they were to retain the Truth, and discover the Pretences of vain Men. Such a Form our Apostle delivered unto *Timothy*, which he commands him to hold fast, in Opposition to any Deceivers. **Hold fast the Form of sound Words, which thou hast heard of me, in Faith and Love, which is in Christ Jesus.**

Upon this I will consider the Eighth Article, which says, " The Three Creeds, *Nicene* Creed, *Athanasius* Creed, and that which is commonly called the Apostles Creed, ought thoroughly to be received and believed ; for they may be proved by most certain Warrants of Holy Scripture ".

I. The Three Creeds ought thoroughly to be received and believed.

II. The Reason why they are to be received, is, because they may be prov'd by most certain Warrants of the Holy Scripture.

I. The Three Creeds, the Apostles, *Nicene*, and *Athanasian*, ought to be receiv'd and believed. I shall therefore shew, that the Apostles did deliver a Form of sound Words to their Converts ; that the Creed, which we call the Apostles, was in all likelihood the same which they delivered ; that upon the Rise of *Arianism* the *Nicene* Creed, which the Council of *Nice* publish'd, was an undoubted Exposition of the Apostles ; and that the *Athanasian* Creed was penn'd by *Athanasius* in the Time of his Persecution, to shew the Orthodoxy of his Faith.

1st, That the Apostles did deliver a Form of sound Words to their Converts, to be remember'd by them, is past doubt : Which they sometimes term the One Faith, the Rule they are to walk by ; sometime the Depositum, or that which was committed to their Trust, or the first Principles of the Oracles of God ; sometimes the Foundation of the Apostles, which they laid and built upon ; and sometimes the

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the Faith once deliver'd unto the Saints. And therefore whatever the Form or Rule of Faith was, it is undeniable that they had one, which they communicated to their Converts, and imparted as a Standard to measure Truth by. As they were appointed to go and disciple all Nations, and to remain separate from one another, it was very reasonable that they should have some common Declaration of Faith, by which their respective Disciples might know one another, and be able to oppose Gainlayers. And since we read of such a Form and Rule, we may safely conclude, that they had agreed upon it, and that the Converts over all the World were to preserve it. *And as many as walk according to this Rule, Peace be on them, and Mercy, and on the Israel of God.*

Gal. 6. 16.

2. The Creed, which they call the Apostles, was in all likelihood the same which they deliver'd. For as it is manifest they had a Form of sound Words, what could it be but the same, which the first Christians after them recite and publish as Apostolical? I know it is reported out of *Clemens Romanus*, that the Apostles enjoying the Gift of Tongues, being assembled together, fram'd the Creed, which the Christian Church now receives; every one adding his own Sentiments; that departing from one another, they might publish this same Rule to all Nations. But admitting that this Report should be suspicious, as that also which assigns to every Apostle an Article; yet we have reason to conclude from plain Texts of Scripture, that they had a Form and Rule; and what could that be, but the same which *Justin Martyr*, *Irenaeus*, and *Tertullian* mention, which comes as near to that, which we call the Apostles, as if it was the very same. And therefore let the Story of the Apostles Assembly be as fallacious as some would have it, we are assur'd from Scripture they had a Form; and that is sufficient to guide us to that, which in the first Times was called Apostolical: For we hear of no other Form but that; and for that Reason it should be the same, which the Apostles made current with their Authority. It cannot be thought in those early Days, that they would invent, coin, and establish an Article, according to the Necessities of the Church, as a dangerous Conceit would insinuate: For this Form was in Reputation soon after the Apostles decease; and allow but such a Necessity of making and declaring new Articles, and in Process of Time we may change our Creed, and our Bibles. This is enough to caution us against modern Inventions; for the Faith which we profess, was once delivered unto the Saints. *O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and opposition of science falsely so called.*

1. Tim. 6. 20.

3. Upon the Rise of *Arianism*, the *Nicene Creed* was an undoubted Exposition of the Apostles; as may be observ'd by any indifferent Judge, that will compare them together; and whatever modern Pretenders may clamour, the *Nicene Fathers* did but publish the old Faith, and add those significative Words, which the Catholick Church, long before *Arius* was born, profess'd under other Terms. It appears from *Ignatius*, and others, that the Christians believ'd Jesus to be the Son of God, and God equal with the Father, before his

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1 Tim. 3. 16.

Divinity was so much as called in Question: But when it was deny'd by some, and doubted of by others, the *Nicene* Fathers could do no less, than collect the common Sentiments of Christians upon this Point, and for ever free the Majesty of the Son of God from the vile Aspersions of his Adversaries, by a plain Exposition of their own; they were so old and so knowing, that they could not mistake the unanimous Sense of their Forefathers in this Matter; and had been so stout under Persecutions, and resolute in the Profession of their Principles, that it cannot be suppos'd, that they would start up, and maintain a novel Doctrine, so disparaging and disagreeing with former Sentiments. There were not above three Centuries past since the Apostles and Apostolical Men were amongst them. They had all the Advantages of Records and Tradition, and knew better what the Times before them thought of the Son of God, than any upstart *Unitarians*. And as they were conven'd by the Great *Constantine* to publish the Truth, as profess'd by the Catholick Church, we may be certain that their Exposition contains the true Sense of the Apostles Creed; and that the first Christians acknowledge, that the Holy Jesus was Light of Light, God of God, Very God, begotten, not made, being of One Substance with the Father, by whom all Things were made: Or in *St. Paul's* Language, God manifested in the Flesh. And without controversy, great is the Mystery of Godliness; God was manifested in the Flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of Angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the World, received up into Glory.

4. The *Athanasian* Creed was penn'd in the Time of his Persecution, (as is presum'd) to show the Orthodoxy of his Faith; he was driven from Place to Place by the *Arians*, and was forc'd to leave *Asia*, and come into *Europe* for his Safety. And (as it was usual in those Days) when any Patriarch or Bishop was driven from his Diocese, to write a short Sum or Account of their Faith, to satisfy those to whom they fled; *Athanasius* thought fit to write the Confession of his Faith (for which the *Arians* hated him so mortally, and pursued him with such bloody Minds) which hath ever since gone by his Name, or is known by the Title of *Athanasius's* Creed. Though some are confident it was compos'd by *Vigilius Tapsensis*. It is stigmatiz'd indeed by his Adversaries as presumptuous, being the Work of a private Man, who undertakes to damn all that are not of his Mind: But not so private as is pretended, for he was a Patriarch, and well acquainted with the Principles of the *Eastern* Churches. And since he wrote no more than what the Orthodox under his Charge consented to, and what the *Latin* Bishops approved of, I cannot see wherein he was or could be blam'd. What would his Enemies have him do? May he write his Faith, or not? If he might, (as Mankind will agree to be reasonable), Wherein is he to be accused, or condemned for Innovation, when he writes the very same Faith, which the *Eastern* and *Western* Churches acknowledge to be true concerning the Holy Trinity? But it seems he says, "Whosoever will be saved, before all Things it is necessary that he hold the Catholick Faith; which Faith except every one keep undefiled, with-
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“out doubt he shall perish everlastingly”. What Boldness is in this more than should be? Or what does he here publish that is not according to Scripture? Is it necessary to believe in God manifested in the Flesh, or in the Holy Spirit of God, by which we are sealed to the Day of Redemption? If it is necessary to Salvation to believe this, and there is no Pardon of Sin to be obtain’d, no Eternal Life to be enjoy’d, but what God manifested in the Flesh, is appointed by his Father to give; Wherein is *Atbanasius* an Offender; or in what hath he discover’d intolerable Pride? Is it a Crime to publish the same Faith, which the Scriptures contain? Or for a Bishop or a Patriarch to apply the Threatning of Damnation, which his Lord hath authoriz’d him to pronounce? But it is urg’d further, that he says, “He therefore that would be saved, must thus think of the Trinity”, according to his Explication and Sense. Why not? For either the Scripture reveals to us, that there is a Trinity in Unity, or not: If it does, how can the Equality of Majesty and Power be better explain’d? And how can he be represented as proud and imperious, when he writes no more than what the Scripture warrants him in, and taught him to write? Upon the whole therefore our Church acknowledges his Creed as Authentick, and teaches all her genuine Children to believe, that there is but One God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. She in effect confesses, that he hath compriz’d the true Sense of the Catholick Church in his Creed; and therefore she hath appointed it to be read at particular Seasons, that her Concurrence in this grand Catholick Doctrine may be publish’d and known by all that are in her Communion. But,

II. The Reason which our Church gives, why these Three Creeds ought to be thoroughly received, is, Because they may be prov’d by express Warrant of the Holy Scriptures. There is no Question moved concerning the Apostles Creed, it being exactly agreeable to the very Words of the Sacred Canon. And the *Nicene* comes so near to the Apostles in Explication, and is so consonant to many Texts in Scripture, that the vast Concourse of Bishops at *Nice* subscribed it, some few excepted. The *Atbanasian* Creed hath been much more oppos’d, especially in the two last Centuries by the *Unitarians*; but it is in it self so conformable to the Unity of the Godhead, in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and so fitted to the sacred Text, that I cannot see how it can be oppos’d by any, but *Arians* or *Socinians*. To be sure our Church receives it, and declares it may be proved by express Warrants of Scripture, as well as the other Two; as hath been proved by me in the Article of the Trinity. Our Church which would have no Creed received or believed, but as proved by the Holy Scriptures; leaves us at Liberty to try and examine these Creeds by the Word of God, and encourages us to reject any Articles of Faith, for which we can find no Scripture.

1st, Our Church would have no Creed received or believed, but as prov’d by Holy Scripture; not so much as the Apostles or any other; unless certain Warrant from the Holy Text can be produc’d on their Side. She refers not her self to Traditions, to a Divine Au-

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Authority lodged in her self, or that absolute Dominion that some may challenge, to lord it over God's Heritage: Plain Text of Scripture is in her Esteem of greatest Moment, and weighs them all down. When the Scripture says, *Drink ye all of this*; she will have the Laity to partake of the Cup, notwithstanding the Cry of Tradition. When the Scripture says, *Search the Scriptures*; she will not side with a Church, which shuts them up in an unknown Tongue. When the Scripture says, *Let Man or Angel be accursed, that preaches another Gospel*; our Church will admit of no new Gospel. She is sensible that cunning crafty Men lye in wait to deceive, and always appeals to Scripture as the best Warrant to secure our Faith. *All Scripture is given, that the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good Works.*

2 Tim. 3. 17.

1 John 5. 7.

2. We are left at Liberty to try and examine all Creeds by the Scriptures, for our Information and Satisfaction. For this Purpose the Bible is laid before you in your Mother-Tongue, and ye are with much Earnestness call'd upon to read for your selves; ye must consider for your selves, and believe for your selves: But how can ye consider and believe, without trying your Principles by the Word, and examining what ye believe by it? This Liberty will in no Case excuse either *Arian* or *Socinian*; for if they have but Sense enough to tell Three, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, they must deny plain Scripture, if they will not acknowledge the Trinity. *For there are Three which bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these Three are One.*

3. We are encouraged to reject all those Articles, for which we can find no Scripture: And most certain Warrants of Scripture have induc'd us to admit of these Three Creeds. If any other Creeds should be obtruded upon you, for which there is no Scripture, ye are obliged to reject them. There is a new Creed got into the World, which some are very fond of, and which is offer'd to a very great many to be receiv'd and believ'd; I mean the *Trent* Creed, by which ye must believe Seven Sacraments, Justification by Merits, Purgatory after this Life, the Sacrifice of the Mass, Transubstantiation, the Sacrament in one Kind, the Invocation of Saints, the Veneration of Relicks, and the Adoration of Images; that the *Roman* Church is Head of all Churches, and the Pope Head in that. The only way that ye can take to try the Reality of this Creed, is to take your Bible and examine Article after Article by the Scriptures; and if ye can find any or all of them warranted therein, I would advise you to believe them; if you cannot, as I am persuaded it will puzzle the most diligent amongst you to find any Expression in Holy Writ proper to establish such Doctrines upon, it is your Duty to reject them. For as we desire not to be credited any further, than our Words are agreeable to the Holy Scriptures; ye ought to take the same Liberty in examining the Opinions of other Churches, and to oppose that as counterfeit, which is not warranted by the Holy Scriptures, though magnified as Rational, and recommended to you by some great Names. The Word is our Rule and our Guide, by which in such Cases we are to stand or fall. As the *Jews* formerly

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appeal'd to the Law and Testimony; and rejected what was not agreeable thereto; we must apply ourselves to the Holy Scriptures in the Examination of our Faith; and if it is conformable to them, it is sound and good; If not, we may not receive or entertain it.

From this it is clear, that it is necessary for you in these Times to know and understand your Faith, to keep steadily to that, which the Catholick Church has convey'd to you, to live up to your Creed, and to please your selves in Well-doing, with the comfortable Expectations of a Resurrection and Eternal Life; which ye say ye do believe.

1st, It is necessary for you in these perilous Times, to know and understand your Faith, that ye may be fixed in your Principles, and remain unshaken in the Truth. We live in those Days in which some appear against all Religion; and the Fools are grown so impudent as to say there is no God; others confess a Deity indeed, but of their own Notion and setting up, and will not allow Revelation to govern their Thoughts, or to be the Foundation of their Opinions. Such are Theists, who own a Supreme Majesty of Heaven, but deny the Trinity in it. Not a few will acknowledge the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who in Effect deny them, declaring Christ to be but a Man, and the Holy Spirit but an Operative Virtue and Power of the most High. In such a Variety of Opinions, what should the sincere Christian do, but keep to his Creed, as warranted by the Scriptures; and if any contradict the Creeds, or establish contrary Doctrines, let them be look'd upon as Deceivers, as Erroneous, and not fit to be trusted. Your Creeds are in such Cases your Rule and Guide; and if any bring not that Doctrine with them, let them not be entertained or encouraged by you. *If there come any unto you, and bring not this Doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds.*

2 Joh. 10, 11.

2. Keep steadily to that Doctrine, which the Catholick Church hath conveyed unto you. For the Primitive Christians knew best what was the Mind of Christ, and his Apostles; and the Form of sound Words, which they have handed to us, must be most consonant to the Truth: As therefore ye would not remove some ancient Land-Marks, by which Possessions are bounded, ye must not vary from the Catholick Faith, or admit of new Terms in Creeds; for this is in Effect to remove old Catholick Boundaries of the Faith, and to yield to those, who after they have corrupted the Faith, will fill your Heads with unsound Notions, and lead you into Destruction. We are allow'd to be zealous for the Faith of Christ, and if ever we contend earnestly, we may for the good old Doctrine of the Church, and the good old Way to Heaven. *Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you, that ye should earnestly contend for the Faith, which was once delivered unto the Saints.*

Jude 3.

3. It must be your Care to live up to your Creeds, and to walk in Newness of Life, according to your Expectations. The true Faith is necessary, but it is a good Life that must adorn it; and a

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Jam. 2. 26.

Jam. 1. 22.

Behaviour agreeable to the Greatness of it, that must make it saving. Those that call'd upon Christ as Lord, had a true Faith; for they own'd him as Lord, pray'd to him as Lord, and wrought Miracles by his Authority and Power; and yet their Faith was but of little Worth, when they wrought Iniquity, and lived not up to their Faith. We also may believe rightly the Incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, and may not be the better for our Creed, when we persist in Sin, and expect that the Orthodoxy of our Creed should make Amends for the Viciousness of our Hearts, and the Corruption of our Lives. If we would proceed as sincere Christians should and ought, we should compare our Creeds and our Lives, and not only take care to believe as we ought, but to practise as we are commanded; that our Heads may be established in the true Doctrine, and our Hearts in true Piety: And we must not only believe as the Church believes, but act as the Church acts, and abound in every Thing that is Praiseworthy, and of good Report. As we profess the Truth, the Truth must set us free from the Slavery of Sin and Satan, and engage us in all that is good. *For as the Body without the Spirit is dead, so Faith without Works is dead also.*

4. When ye believe and practise as ye ought, ye may please yourselves with the comfortable Expectation of the Resurrection and Eternal Life, which ye profess to believe: For as ye own the Truth, and live up to it, ye may look beyond the melancholy Grave, and hope to rise again to live for ever; as your Lord hath promised, and ye have been taught to expect. Ye must therefore keep to the Truth and your Duty; hold fast the Form of sound Words, and credit it by holy Living. Your Works will prove the Truth of your Faith, and your Faith will commend the Goodness of your Works; and both through Christ will bring you unto Salvation. *Be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*

3. It must be your Care to live up to your Creeds, and to walk in Newness of Life, according to your Expectations. The true Christian, but it is a good Life that must adorn it; and a

2. Keep steadily to that Doctrine, which the Catholic Church hath conveyed unto you. For the Primitive Christians knew well what was the Mind of Christ, and his Apostles; and the Form of sound Words, which they have handed to us, and we must continue true to the Truth: As therefore we would not remove from the old Land-Marks, by which Possessions are bounded, we will not vary from the Catholic Faith, or admit of new Terms in Creeds; for this is in Effect to remove old Catholic Boundaries of the Faith, and to yield to those who after they have corrupted the Faith, will fill your Heads with unground Notions, and lead you into Destruction. We are allow'd to be zealous for the Faith of Christ, and if ever we contend earnestly, we may for the good old Doctrine of the Church, and the good old Way to Heaven. Beloved, when I give all diligence to write unto you of the common Salvation, it was much for me to write unto you, and expect you, that we should earnestly contend for the Faith, which once was delivered unto the Saints.

3. It must be your Care to live up to your Creeds, and to walk in Newness of Life, according to your Expectations. The true Christian, but it is a good Life that must adorn it; and a

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ARTICLE IX.

GAL. V. First Part of the 17th Verse

For the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit.

THERE is a Disorder in Human Nature, which Heathens complain of, and Christians bewail. The inferior Appetites have gained an Ascendant over the Superior, and the Animal over the Rational: **For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit.** And because in the Beginning, when Man was first made, it was not so; I will explain the Ninth Article of our Church, which gives an Account of the Origin of this Disorder, when it says, That "Original Sin standeth not in the following of *Adam* (as the *Pelagians* do vainly talk), but it is the Fault and Corruption of every Man, that naturally is engender'd of the Offspring of *Adam*, whereby Man is very far gone from Original Righteousness, and is of his own Nature inclin'd to evil; so that the Flesh lusteth always against the Spirit: And therefore in every Person born into this World, it deserveth God's Wrath and Damnation. And this Infection of Nature doth remain, yea in them that are regenerated; whereby the Lust of the Flesh, called in Greek *φθονος*, (*Phronema Sarkos*), which some do expound the Wisdom, some Sensuality, some the Affection, some the Desire of the Flesh, is not subject to the Law of God. And although there is no Condemnation for them that believe and are baptiz'd, yet the Apostle doth confess, That Concupiscence and Lust hath of it self the Nature of Sin." I shall consider,

- I. What Original Sin is not.
- II. What it is, and how it exerts it self.
- III. What it deserves.
- IV. How it remains in very good Men.
- V. Though it brings no Condemnation to the baptiz'd, it hath the Nature of Sin.

I. What it is not. That Original Sin is not an Imitation of *Adam* in his Sin, or standeth not in the following of *Adam*, or in the actual Transgression of some Law, by our voluntary Choice and Consent (as the *Pelagians* assert); for then it will follow, that all Men are innocent when born; and that there can be no such Sin as Original Sin, as it is commonly understood; and Infants are punish'd in Innocency.

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Psal. 58. 3.

Rom. 5. 19,
the first Part.

Rom. 5. 12.

1st, Did Original Sin stand in Imitation of *Adam*, then it would follow, that all Men are innocent when born, and bring with them into the World the same Innocency and Holiness, which *Adam* possess'd when he was at first created; and that all Deviations from the Eternal Rules of Righteousness, and all Inclinations to that which is evil, arise from their own free Choice and Determinations; and then no Man can be said to be a Sinner, till he wilfully and deliberately transgresseth some one known Law of God in his own Person; and Children just born are not the worse for *Adam's* Transgression, but remain perfectly innocent, before they commit actual Sin. But this is contrary to the common Observation of Mankind; for we see that Children as soon as they come to the Use of Reason, discover very often perverse Inclinations; not only those that hear and see enough to spoil their native Simplicity, but those also that are religiously brought up, and secur'd with all care, as far as may be, from the contagious Examples of vain Persons. *The wicked are estranged from the Womb, they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking Lies.*

2^d. If Original Sin standeth in Imitation of *Adam*, there can be no such Sin as Original Sin, as it is commonly understood; for it is then no other than the first Sin, and all the rest are committed in Imitation of that; and Sinners can be no farther concern'd in it, than as they take it for the Pattern or Example to sin by. Their own actual Sins are Original Sins, and they had no Share or Part in that Original Sin, which *Adam* committed; unless it was possible for them to chuse before they were born, and to consent to eat the forbidden Fruit, before they had a Being. But in Opposition to this, St. Paul says expressly, *By one Man's Disobedience many were made Sinners.*

3^d. If Original Sin stand barely in the Imitation of *Adam*, then Infants are punish'd as Transgressors, when they are innocent; for many of them die as soon as they are born, and sustain the Punishment of Sin, before they could deserve it. How is it possible for them to sin as *Adam* did, who have not Knowledge to chuse or determine for themselves; who understand neither Law nor Threatening; and are not sensible of Government or Punishment; who yet bear the Wages of Sin, and gasp out their Breath, almost as soon as they had it? Would the Just and Righteous God destroy such Innocents, if they had not fallen in *Adam*? Or force them to taste of Death, if they were not in some Respect or other guilty before him? *Wherefore as by one Man sin enter'd into the World, and Death by Sin, and so Death pass'd upon all Men, for that all have sinned.*

II. What Original Sin is, or how it does discover it self. It is that whereby Man is very far gone from Original Righteousness, and is of his own Nature inclin'd to evil; so that the Flesh lusteth always against the Spirit.

1st, It is undeniable, that we are gone off from Original Righteousness, or that Original Innocency, which *Adam* enjoy'd, and from the Womb we are corrupted, and gone astray. Our Hearts will convince us, that we are not so upright as *Adam* was, when created; and

and that we differ vastly from that primitive Excellency, he was endued with. Was that Darkness upon the Understanding from the Beginning upon the whole Race of Men, which now remains? Or that Deviation of the Will, and Wandring of the Affections, which disturbs us in the Worship of God? Were we thus degenerate and imperfect, thus ignorant and sensual, thus perverse and corrupt, when he made us? Or was *Adam* in his Original in no better Temper and Disposition than we are in by Nature? Would the Holy and Righteous God produce such a Set of Creatures, so helpless, wandering, and imperfect, so prone to evil, so delighting in it? This Disorder must be the Result of our first Parents Presumption, the Sin of *Adam*: For, *God hath made Man upright, but they have sought out many Inventions.*

Eccles. 7. 29.

2. Of our own Nature we are inclin'd to evil, so that the Flesh always lusteth against the Spirit. There seems to be a new Bias or Inclination raised up in us, very different from that which Nature in its Purity impress'd upon us: We have an Inclination contracted by Birth, to that which God's Law forbiddeth; we have a Tendency to displease him, a Will to presume, a Desire to do evil, and there is a sensual Pleasure and Delight, which arises from it. The Flesh is pleased when it succeeds in its Usurpation against the Spirit, and we take a Complacency in humouring our vain Inclinations; nay, we may sometimes see that which is our Duty, may approve of it as fit and rational, may at that Moment commend and admire it; and yet there is that contrary Principle in us, that Proclivity of Nature to that which is evil, that we neglect our Duty, and tumultuously engage in those Practices that are contrary to it. The Flesh lusts against the Spirit, grows insolent and factious, and will not let Reason or Grace dispose of us, or reign in us; insomuch as close Consideration and great Struggling is necessary, before we can gain the Mastery, and be our selves: This is so notoriously true, so known by daily Experience, and so amazing to the sincere and pious, that we must confess that we are some way or other deviated from God, disorder'd in our Faculties, deprav'd in our Inclinations, corrupted in our Tempers, and that only the Grace of the Gospel can restore us. *But I see another Law in my Members, warring against the Law of my Mind, and bringing me into Captivity to the Law of Sin, which is in my Members.*

Rom. 7. 23.

III. This Original Sin hath been so corrupting, that in every Person born into this World, it deserves wrath and Damnation. For God may well be angry to find his excellent Workmanship spoil'd in us; to observe the Wheels of Nature out of Course, and the whole Fabrick, with all the curious Faculties of it disorder'd, and in a manner spoiled: It may provoke the Almighty, to see the Offspring of Creatures, that were like to Angels, degenerated so far as to be averse to that which is good, and to that which was appointed to be our Duty; and prone to evil, to that which he had forbidden. And since this is occasion'd by Sin, or is the Effect of Sin, and provoking in it self, it deserves Damnation, and God may in his Wrath dash the Ge-

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Rom. 5. 14.

Generation of Men in Pieces, like a Potter's Vessel. And though we are no farther concern'd in this, than in descending from polluted Loins, and being the Offspring of disobedient Parents, or by our own voluntary Choice consenting to the Guilt of the first Transgression, yet he may shew his Wrath, and inflict it upon us for this our Degeneracy. I cannot, I dare not say, that because it deserves Wrath and Damnation, therefore Infants that never liv'd to chuse and determine for themselves, are damned for it. For God is gracious and merciful, and though it deserves Damnation, may spare. He knows how to make Allowances for Infants, for that which was not in their Power to prevent; and though they die in Adam, they may be made alive in Jesus Christ. *Nevertheless Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's Transgression.*

IV. This Original Sin, or Infection of Nature, doth remain, even in them that are regenerated; and the Lust of the Flesh is not subject to the Law of God.

Rom. 7. 14, 15.

1st, It doth remain and continue in the vain Part of Men, and prompts them forward to the Commission of Evil. This is that which sways and inclines them to that which is forbidden, which rampers with their Minds, and puts false Reasonings upon them, which engages their Wills in that which is wicked and pernicious, and hurries on their Affections after that which is sensual and impure. Their own Hearts by Degrees are bad enough to make them worse, and the more Sin they commit, the more ready and easy they find it, to be the more wicked. But this Original Infection, which they brought into the World with them, is at the Bottom of all this, ferments in the Soul, and inflames the animal Part: This clouds Reason, and encompasses it with Fumes of sensual Darkness, whilst Lust gets the upper Hand and reigns. And this is the Root from whence so much Corruption arises, and abounds upon the Earth. And yet all the Time the wicked are sensible, that whilst they are thus corrupted, and gone astray, they ought to do otherwise: Their Conscience accuses, their Reason, at intervals, checks, and they know that they are under an holy, just, good, Law, and are bound to do otherwise. Which may convince any of them, that they are gone off from Original Righteousness, and are under the Influences of the Fall. *For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under Sin; for that which I do, I allow not; for what I would, that I do not, but what I hate, that I do.*

2^{dly}, This Infection of Nature remains in the regenerate, in those that are baptiz'd, and live up to the Covenant of Grace; and too often raises up Factions in those Hearts, where the Spirit of God commands. Those that are sincerely pious, know this to be true, and are forc'd to keep a strict Watch, to maintain a constant Guard, to pray heartily, to strive carefully against all evil Thoughts, Motions, or Inclinations, and to suppress the first Fermentations of this natural Corruption in them, lest it should detain them in the Administration of that which is forbidden, or lead them into Sin. And if any that

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that are sincerely Christian, and seriously good, wonder at it, or are ignorant of this; I would desire them to tell from whence those sudden and surprizing Motions to Evil come, from what Fountain their unhappy and troublesome Thoughts flow, from what Principle those strong Impulses arise, which tempt them to be wicked; and from what Defect it is, that all their Infirmities and Weaknesses crowd in upon them. Let them declare from whence that Aversion to good springs up, that Opposition to the Grace of God is maintain'd, and that struggling and contending of the Animal Powers with the Rational is supported: From whence can proceed those Checks in Duty, those Distractions in attending to it, that Forgetfulness in vertuous Designs, and that Forwardness in Vicious, that is so present with us? Does not all this Pollution spring from the Heart, defile the Man more and more, and discover that the Fountain-Head is corrupted, which conveys its Filth into all the Streams? 'Tis true, a regenerate Man, that is a true Christian, will do his best to keep under all these Factions within him; he will not let Sin reign in his mortal Body, or fulfil the Lusts thereof; he will not be led captive by those Impulses, or be a Slave to such Inclinations, but will, through the Grace of God, maintain his Integrity, and keep his Conscience void of Offence: But yet let him do his best, he will be thus assaulted, will lye expos'd to such Temptations; He carries the Infections in his own Breast, he dwells in a polluted Habitation; and though he makes a shift to maintain his Ground, and keep himself from mortal Infection, he must be contented to remain in this perilous State, till Death turns his Body into Dust, to be new cast and moulded into a Body for Immortality and Glory. This is the Case of all good Men that will live godly; they are in the Flesh, and will be tempted to live after the Flesh; but they watch, pray, strive, and contend, by the Help of the Spirit, to mortify the Deeds of the Body, that they may live. *For if ye live after the Flesh, ye shall dye; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the Body, ye shall live.*

Rom. 8. 13.

3dly, The Lust of the Flesh, *φρονημα σαρκος* (*Phronema Sarkos*) is not subject to the Law of God. Some expound this the Wisdom of the Flesh, that carnal Wisdom that leadeth unto Sin, when Men are wise for this present State, and look no farther. Some call it Sensuality, when the Flesh governs and leads Men into Impurity and Uncleanness, as if it were the greatest Wisdom to imitate the Beasts that perish, who place all their Happiness in pleasing of the Sense. Some term it the Desire and Affection of the Flesh; by which the Flesh overtops Reason, frustrates Grace, and puts the Man upon carnal Desires and Enjoyments. We may call it the Policy of the Flesh, by which since the Fall it usurps and takes the Government of the Man, leading him captive into all Sin and Vice. But let it speak what *English* we please, it certainly denotes that Disorder of the human Soul and Body, whereby the Man hath lost his Freedom, and the Command of himself, and will not endure to be subject unto the Laws of God, or to live and govern himself as he hath commanded. For the Fall hath in a manner inverted the very

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22, 23.

Order of Nature; and Reason that should command, Conscience that should direct, Grace that should assist, are all laid aside as useless; and Sense undertakes to govern and to guide the Man to his truest Happiness, by Concupiscence and Lust. Thus when Reason begins to direct, it is silent, and the prevailing Faction pushes the Man forward into that which is unreasonable. *I find then a Law that when I would do good, evil is present with me; for I delight in the Law of God after the inward Man. But I see another Law in my Members, warring against the Law of my Mind, and bringing me into Captivity to the Law of Sin, which is in my Members.*

¶ Though it brings no Condemnation to the baptiz'd, to them that believe and live up to the Gospel; yet it hath the Nature of Sin, and is sinful in its self, as well as unhappy and miserable in the Effects. For though Christ hath freed us from Condemnation; who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit; yet by this inbred Pollution we see how vile we are without Christ, and how liable to Wrath in our natural State. We have Reason therefore to praise God, that we, as wretched as we are, may obtain our Deliverance through his Blood: That though we are in the Flesh, we need not live after the Flesh; though we have a bad Neighbour, which will be troublesome, it cannot harm us; and that though we are miserable for a while, we shall not be so for ever. For if we strive against this Concupiscence, it shall not Master us: If we through Grace do mortify the Deeds of the Body, we shall at last free our selves from the Assaults, Power, and Dominion of Sin, and live: And yet when we have done our best, and have acquitted our selves in Faithfulness, this Wisdom of the Flesh is our Unhappiness, our Clog, and indeed our Fault. We are not the Men we should be, were it not for that; nor can we be so exact and entire before God. Our Saviour hath promised to pardon it, but he does not change the Nature of it, but leaves it as a Thorn in our Side, a Check to our Enjoyments, and a Snare and Danger, if we are not watchful and faithful. As it was Sin in us before we were Christians, it is Sin in us after we are Christians, with this Difference, that before we submitted to the Gospel, we were answerable for it; but since, it is our Weakness, Unhappiness, and Misfortune; but whilst we strive against it, and will not consent unto it, our Lord will pass it by, and not impute it to us. *But now hath he obtained a more excellent Ministry, by how much also he is the Mediator of a better Covenant, which was established upon better Promises.*

Heb. 8. 6.

From this it is evident, that we are all Children of Wrath in our Natural State; that we ought to strive daily against the Corruption that is in us; that if we do not subdue that, we are in Danger of being subdued by it; that the best and holiest have no Reason to boast, or to glory before God.

1st. In our natural State, we are all the Children of Wrath, fallen Creatures, Guilty of Sin, and liable to be condemned. Our very

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ry Children that live not long enough to know us or themselves, die before our Eyes, as the Offspring of Malefactors; and though we count them innocent, they share in the common Calamities of human Life, and dye like Offenders. It has pleas'd God to include all under Sin, that we may know our Guilt, and admire our Deliverer. For though the first Sin has made such an Alteration upon the Earth, and subjected the Race of Mankind to the Stroke of Death, that both Young and Old die, and come to a fearful End; yet Christ hath been amongst us, and set us free from the Law of Sin and Death, and put us into a State of Pardon and Reconciliation: So that being by Nature the Children of Wrath, we are hereby made the Children of Grace, and as liable as we were before to die, we may now live for ever after Death. *There is therefore now no Condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit.*

Rom. 8. 1.

2dly, As this Original Pollution remains in all of us, we must strive daily against it, and preserve our selves free from the Contagion of it. "Let not Sin therefore reign in your mortal Body, that ye should obey it in the Lusts thereof, neither yield your selves *"Servants to Iniquity"*. But as he which hath called you to be thus careful, and enabled you by his Grace to obey him, is true; believe that it is now put into your Power to be obedient; and that through his Grace, ye may crucify the old Man, may mortify the Deeds of the Body, and may live as those, that are enabled to conquer the Remains of Original Sin in you, and to approve your selves unto God. He that commanded you to strive, knows your Frame, remembers your Weaknesses, and will enable you to bring the Affections, and Lusts of the Flesh into the Obedience of Faith. Let it not be said any more, that the Task is too great, or too hard; for he that commands you to submit Body and Soul to the Gospel, will strengthen you for the Performance; for be assur'd, that whatever Duty God calls you to, his Grace is ready to assist. *Mortify therefore your Members which are upon Earth, Fornication, Uncleanneſs, inordinate Affection, evil Concupiſcence, and Covetouſneſs, which is Idolatry; for which things ſake the Wrath of God cometh upon the Children of Diſobediencē.*

Coloſ. 3. 5, 6.

3dly, If we do not ſubdue this Original Pollution in us, we are in Danger of being ſubdued by it: For it is of an insolent Nature; if it is not kept under and mortified by Prayer and Grace, it will ſtrive for the Maſtery, and lead us into Sin and Death. Chuse therefore what ye will be guided by, either the Grace of God, which upon your Baptiſm took Poſſeſſion of you, or this Inmate, this ſly and wicked Principle, which tempts you to evil. If ye will not fruſtrate the Grace of God, the Spirit will help you to mortify the Deeds of the Body, to maintain the Liberty which Chriſt hath placed you in. Ye may retain the proper Uſe of your Faculties, the Government of your Hearts and Lives, and may improve in Piety, grow in Grace, and advance toward the Kingdom of Heaven. But if ye will remove your Guards, attend to the Suggeſtions of the Fleſh, and indulge

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dulge your Lusts, ye may soon find that evil is present with you, will follow you hard, and debase your Lives. Consider what ye do, for the best and holiest can but keep their Hearts in Subjection to Christ, and have no Cause to glory before him; but the worst have Reason to be asham'd, when they allow the inferior Part of the Man to lead them to all Iniquity. *But every Man is tempted, when he is led away of his own Lust, and enticed; then when Lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth Sin, and Sin when it is finished, bringeth forth Death.*

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Rom. 2. 14.

lost; he had the Notions of Good and Evil remaining in him, and he was left to chuse and determine for himself; to act as well as he could: Not so much as *Adam* lost all rational Apprehensions; for he knew he had offended, and hid himself, he was willing to extenuate his Crime, and laid the Blame upon *Eve*: And as much as his Posterity are disabled by him, they are reasonable Creatures still, appointed to dispose of their own Actions, and do enjoy the Assistance of Conscience to advise with, and are able to perform natural and civil Actions, in a worthy and acceptable Manner: We must therefore take heed, that we do not unman our selves too much by the Pretence of the Fall; or give out that we are more weaken'd than indeed we are. For it is visible amongst Heathens and Infidels, that they have some Strength left, to distinguish themselves and their Actions. *For when the Gentiles, which have not the Law, do by Nature the Things contain'd in the Law, these having not the Law, are a Law unto themselves.*

Rom. 2. 15.

2. Man in his natural Strength may perform some good Works, according to the Measure of Reason and Strength that is left; not that he can perform that which is perfectly good, and in every Respect compleat; for that lies beyond his natural Strength, and was the proper Task for *Adam* in his Innocency; but that which is good in its Kind and Degree compar'd with other Actions, and with the Rule of right Reason. Thus it is possible for an Heathen to be a loving Husband, or a kind Father, a faithful Master, and an honest Neighbour; a dutiful Subject, and a true Servant: And amongst such People we may observe some to be sober and temperate, others just and honest; some to be Lovers of Goodness and Truth, and others valorous and admirers of their Countrey. Now the Works which such perform, are good in their Kind and Place. I do not say, that they are perfect and uniform, such as God will accept and reward; but good in a lower Degree, as agreeable to Reason, and pleasing to Conscience, such as by the Law of Nature they are bound to perform, and such as are their Commendation. The great *Thorn-dike* says, "The Reason of Profit or Pleasure doth not always drown and swallow up the Reason of that which is just and honourable; therefore he that makes not the World to come to be his End, may do that which is truly good for Honesty's Sake, and the Satisfaction of loving it as it deserveth". *Which shew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conscience also bearing witness, and their Thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another.*

3. But neither by his Strength, nor his good Works, can he turn or prepare himself to Faith and Calling upon God, or to believe in Christ, and to call upon God in his Name; for he cannot by all his Strength find out, that Jesus is the Christ, or pray to God for Mercy through his Blood. It is necessary therefore, that Revelation first inform him, that Jesus is the Son of God; and that if he ask in his Name, he shall be accepted: And then the same Revelation, that acquaints the natural Man, that God sent his Son, to seek and save that which was lost; and that if he prays to the Father in his Name, he shall

shall be heard; affords him Grace to believe and to pray, strengthens him for Faith and for Supplication, and enables him to do that, which his natural Strength and his natural Good Works could not lead him to, or empower him to perform. 'Tis true, Revelation presupposes him rational, and applies it self to his rational Power; Grace also assists him in a rational Manner, and does not exclude his Concurrence, when it assists. But without Revelation or Grace, he cannot turn from Sin to God, or call for Help in the Time of Need, *Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God, calleth Jesus accursed; and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.*

1 Cor. 12. 3.

II. The Incapacity of Man, after the Fall, is so great, that he hath no Power to do good Works, pleasant and acceptable to God; which does denote, that the good Works he does in his natural State, are not pleasant nor acceptable to God.

1. The good Works that Man does in the State of Nature, are not pleasant or pleasing to God: For though they are consonant in some Respects to Reason, they are not in that Perfection and Excellency, which (had Man remained Innocent) would have appeared in them. As God had made Man upright, he might demand and expect that Obedience, which had it been consummate, would be the best in its Kind, exactly conformable to his Holy Will, and directly tending to his Glory and Honour. But since the Fall, and since his Image is defac'd, the Obedience that is return'd is lame and defective, such as a clouded Reason, a byas'd Will, and Affections irregular may perform; which cannot be so pleasant to the great Creator, as Works done by his innocent Creatures, without Deficiency or Mistake: For he delights in their Service, as being the same he fitted them for, takes Complacency in their Actions, as truly good and rational, and rejoices in their Works, as the utmost they can perform: But when he finds his Creatures corrupted, their Inclinations perverse, their Choice indirect, their Ends selfish, vain-glorious, or impertinent; their Actions cannot be pleasing to him, till purify'd, and sanctified by the Gospel, or agreeable to his Commandments; and then, *Whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his Commandments, and do those Things that are pleasing in his sight.*

1 John 3. 22

2. The Works that Men, after the Fall, perform in a State of Nature, are not acceptable to God, or such as he will receive for proper Obedience, or will reward with his Favour. For whatever is acceptable to God, is agreeable to his Mind, and entitl'd to his Promise. But such Works cannot be acceptable, because defective, and not conformable to the Laws of Righteousness, which were first impress'd upon his Nature, but in some Respects good, in others blameable, perform'd by Creatures, that are departed from their Innocency; which had lost their native Excellency, were disabled to satisfy Divine Justice for Offences committed, or to offer any Thing exact and perfect; their Works were so far from being acceptable in themselves, that they wanted a Mediator to make their Peace with God, before their Persons or their Actions could find any Favour: And had not he

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Eph. 2. 12.

come and put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself, the Race of Men had been so far from performing any acceptable Service, that they had been still in their Guilt, and under Condemnation, and like to the *Ephesians*: *At that time they were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the Covenant of Promise; having no hope, and without God in the World.*

III. This Incapacity remains, whilst Man is without the Grace of God by Christ, preventing us that we may have a good Will, and working with us, when we have that good Will: But when that visits us, we are enabled to do good Works, pleasant and acceptable to God. We must therefore consider the Grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good Will, and the same Grace working with us, when we have a good Will.

1. 'Tis through the Grace of God, by and through Christ, that we are prevented and brought to a good Will, so as to mind the Things that belong to our Peace. By the Grace of God by Christ we understand his Favour, which calls us to Repentance, and the Assistance of his Spirit, which enables us to repent, which prevents us, and stirs us up, to consider and resolve upon an holy Life; and this preventing Grace acquaints us with the Gospel, entreats us by the Ministry, and at the same Time works inwardly upon our Hearts and Consciences, that we may become a willing People in the Day of his Power.

First, This preventing Grace acquaints us with the Gospel, and the Principles of Christianity, in order to raise up this good Will in us, that our Minds being awaken'd, and our Understandings duly inform'd, we may consider for our own Benefit, and determine for our own Safety. As that Prince prevents his Subjects from proceeding in Rebellion, who carefully instructs them in their Duty, and proposes Terms of Favour to them: So the Living God prevents us after the Fall, by shewing us the Evil of our Ways, promising us Forgiveness, and a Saviour. According to this very Method, our Lord apply'd himself to the *Jews*, calls them to Repentance, invites them to believe the Gospel, and prevents them with the most affectionate Invitations. *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

Matt. 11. 28.

Secondly, To this Day he thus graciously prevents us by his Ministers, and authorizes them to call upon us early and late, to put us in Mind of his Mercy in Christ, and of his Wrath without him: He thus prevents us in the midst of our Vices, summons us when mired with Sin, and would by all means prevail with us, to return from the Errors of our Ways. When we are in full pursuit of Death, the Ministry calls in his Name, uses his Words, promises in his Behalf, and threatens by his Order. And if it is a great Prevention for a Father to send a Messenger to a rebellious Child, and by him to shew him the Danger of a vicious Course, and to invite him Home to his Obedience: It is the same in our Heavenly Father, when he charges his Ministry to be instant with us in Season and out of Season; that we may at last consider and return to a sound Mind, and

and reform. And he gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ.

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Eph. 4. 11,
12.

Thirdly, At the same Time that he prevents us with these external Helps, he prevents us inwardly by his Spirit, and works upon our Hearts and Consciences by Conviction, that he may produce the good Will in us, to fear and serve him, and in this Case, what by enlightening of our Understandings, and moving of our Affections; what by removing what may hinder us in our Determinations, and adding what may hasten us in our Consent, he restores us to the true Use of our Faculties, and enables us to be strong in the Lord; and then we can do all Things through Christ who strengthens us. Thus, as natural Weakness prevails in a State of Nature, when Man is left to himself, and hath nothing of Grace for his Relief and Support: So the Grace of God prevails in a State of Grace, frees us from natural Bondage, delivers our Minds and Wills from that Inability they were under, and restores us to a Capacity to consider and chuse for our selves. So that if we will resolve to be Christians, we may serve God acceptably with Reverence and godly Fear. Wherefore, my Beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling: For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do, of his good Pleasure.

Phil. 2. 12,
13.

2. 'Tis the same Grace which follows us, and worketh with us, when we have a good Will. For as the prevailing Grace of God raises up in us good Desires and holy Resolutions, the same Grace furthurs us with continual Help, and enables us to bring the same to good Effect; and carries us through the Work of Salvation with Success. We are but weak in our selves, and insufficient for the Gospel of Jesus: But when we are resolved and determined for God, his Holy Spirit takes Possession of our Hearts at Baptism, and will help us forward in our Christian Warfare. And it will be our Fault, and none others, if we do not persevere to the End, and remain faithful. For the Grace of God will teach us to live Godly, Righteously, and Soberly, in this present World; it will incline us to that which is good, and carry us through it; or will enable us to continue in our Duty to the End, that we may be saved. Not that we are sufficient of our selves, to think any thing as of our selves; but our Sufficiency is of God.

2 Cor. 3. 5.

From this Explanation of the Article I must observe, that there is a vast Difference between the Tempers of Men in the fallen State: That since the Fall God did gradually train up and prepare Men for the Gospel; that the Grace of God does especially encourage the good Ground; that in the last Day, when Accounts are given up, nothing of Merit can be pleaded or offered; that none of us can properly or strictly be said to be in this natural State.

1. There is a vast Difference between the Tempers of Men in their natural State; between a Socrates and Diogenes, a Tully and Cato; and between their Virtue and Vices, their Improvements and De-

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Deficiencies : Which either shews that there was a Difference in their Formation, or in their Education and Conduct ; but where-ever the Variation lies, it is of vast Consequence in the Management of their Lives : For in the State of Nature, as was the Temper, so usually was the Behaviour, whether in High or Low, Rich or Poor. And this Variety of Tempers remaining under the Gospel, our Saviour tells us of some Ground that was good, which denotes that some was otherwise. *But other seed fell upon good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty fold.*

Matt. 13. 8.

2. Since the Fall, God did gradually train up Men, and prepare them for the Gospel, employing his preventing and following Grace in a wonderful Manner upon them : Thus he disciplin'd the Patriarchs for it by Promises, the Prophets by Visions, the People of the Jews by his Temple-Service, the Heathens by Philosophy, and the most improv'd amongst Jews and Gentiles, upon the Discovery of his Gospel by his Word and Spirit, the Revelation of his Will, and the Assistances of his Grace ; and that from the Fall to this Day, he has cultivated the good Ground, singled out the Worthy, and prepar'd them for himself. Our Lord took particular Care of those, that are in a meet Disposition to embrace and hold fast the Truth. *And if the house be worthy, let your Peace come upon it ; but if it be not worthy, let your Peace return to you.*

Matt. 10. 13.

3. The Grace of God does especially encourage the good Ground, though it bears but thirty or sixty. It is doubtless his Design, that all should become good, and bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance. But since it falls out otherwise, and some under the same Means will not consider and lay it to Heart ; some let the Fowls of the Air devour the Seeds that are sown ; some entertain it in stony Places, some choak the Word with the Cares of this World, and the Deceitfulness of Riches ; some hide their Talents, some mind the Things of this Life, and will not regard the other. God takes notice of the good Ground, and prospers it, blesses it with a large Increase, and delights in it, allows it more Grace and Assistance, and secures it from harm.

Luke 10. 5, 6.

And into whatsoever House ye enter, first say, Peace be to this House ; and if the Son of Peace be there, your Peace shall rest upon it.

Luke 10. 10.

4. At the last Day nothing of Merit can be pleaded before God, for it is through his Grace which prevented us, that we were brought to Repentance ; and it is through the same Grace that follows us, that we are found, and declared faithful. And therefore there can be no Merit pleaded by the holiest and best Christians, they have nothing but what was received, and ought to be improv'd ; and in the midst of all their Attainments, they are but unprofitable Servants. *So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all these Things, which are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable Servants, we have done that which was our duty to do.*

Luke 17. 10.

5. None of us that are baptiz'd, can properly or strictly be said to be in this natural State. For we are thereby made the Children of Grace, reconcil'd unto God, and made nigh unto him, through his Son, and enabled for every good Word or Work. The Heathen

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to this Day have no Knowledge of his Law, and have no Power to do good Works, pleasant and acceptable to him. But we are Christ's, know his Mind, and may be holy in Heart and Life; we are at Liberty to serve him, and may please him both in Body and Soul. He standeth and knocketh at our Souls, opening our Hearts, that we may be saved. *Lydia, whose Heart the Lord opened, that she attended to the Things that were spoken of Paul.*

Article X

Acts 16. 14.

And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

When we consider the Majesty of God, his Righteousness, and Justice, and our own Vileness and Wickedness, we cannot expect any Favour from him upon our own Account, or hope to appear righteous in his Eye, in the Condition that we are in by Nature or Sin, without the Assistance of a Mediator. It has therefore pleased God to send his Son to us, to die for us, that our Sins might be removed, and we might be counted and dealt with as righteous. And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. Which expresses in short the Eleventh Article of our Church, which says: We are accounted righteous before God, only for the Merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by Faith, and not for our own Works or Deservings. Wherefore that we are justified by Faith only, is a most wholesome Doctrine, and very full of Comfort. Where observe,

Article X
I. The Favour of God towards us, in that we are accounted righteous before him, only for the Merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
II. That which entitles us to this, is our Faith: We are counted Righteous by Faith.
III. We cannot challenge any Acceptance upon Consideration of what we do; for we are counted Righteous not for our own Works or Deservings.
IV. This Doctrine is sound and good; Wherefore that we are justified by Faith only, is a most wholesome or sound Doctrine, and full of Comfort.

I will explain these Particulars in their Places; And,
I. The Favour of God towards us is great, in that we are accounted Righteous before him, only for the Merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. For such Sinners as we are, can pretend to no Rightness, but that which God is pleased to call our Rightness; and by Virtue of that Covenant of Grace, which was granted in the Blood of Christ, he counts us Righteous, for the Sake of his Son's Merits; and rewards us in him as righteous. He admits of no other

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ARTICLE XI.

I JOH. I. Latter Part of the 12th Verse.

And the Blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all Sin.

WHEN we consider the Majesty of God, his Righteousness and Justice, and our own Vileness and Wickedness, we cannot expect any Favour from him upon our own Account, or hope to appear righteous in his Eye, in the Condition that we are in by Nature, or Sin, without the Assistance of a Mediator. It has therefore pleased God to send his Son to us, to die for us, that our Sins might be removed, and we might be counted and dealt with as righteous. **And the Blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all Sin.** Which expresses in short the Eleventh Article of our Church, which says :

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- I. The Favour of God towards us, in that we are accounted righteous before him, only for the Merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
- II. That which entitles us to this, is our Faith : We are counted Righteous by Faith.
- III. We cannot challenge any Acceptance upon Consideration of what we do ; for we are counted Righteous not for our own Works or Deservings.
- IV. This Doctrine is sound and good ; Wherefore that we are justified by Faith only, is a most wholesome or sound Doctrine, and full of Comfort.

I will explain these Particulars in their Places. And,

I. The Favour of God towards us is great, in that we are accounted Righteous before him, only for the Merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. For such Sinners as we are, can pretend to no Righteousness, but that which God is pleas'd to call our Righteousness ; and by Vertue of that Covenant of Grace, which was granted in the Blood of Christ, he counts us Righteous, for the Sake of his Son's Merits ; and rewards us in him as righteous. He admits of no

other Righteousness ; and we cannot pretend to offer any other ; we cannot plead Innocency, in that we have all sinned ; nor can we offer up perfect Obedience, unless Grace will call it so in Christ Jesus ; for what we do is imperfect at the best, defil'd and stain'd, and not fit to be offer'd unto God : So that if he condescends to call our Obedience Righteousness, it must be for the Sake of his Son's Merits alone, who died for our Sins, and rose again for our Justification ; who prevail'd with his Father to promise that such vile and unprofitable Servants as we are, should be counted worthy of Everlasting Life. We were incapable of deserving this Favour for our selves or others ; for we had all sinned and fallen short of the Glory of God, and must have perished in our Sins, had not the Lord Jesus merited it in our Behalf, in whom the Father was well pleased, for whose Sake he is willing to be merciful unto us, to forgive us our Sins, and consents that his Blood should cleanse us from all Sin. *And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the Ministry of Reconciliation.*

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XI.

2 Cor. 5. 18.

II. That which entitles us to this, is our Faith in Jesus Christ ; we are counted Righteous by Faith. This must respect our engaging in Christianity, and the Favour we shall reap thereby at the Day of Judgment.

I. We are counted Righteous by Faith, upon our becoming Members of Christ, when we believe the Gospel, and submit to it ; when we give our selves up to Christ, and are baptized into his Flock. For as soon as we declare, that we believe the Message Christ hath brought from the Father, own him for our Lord, and are consecrated to his Service by Baptism ; we are counted Righteous before God, upon Consideration of his Merit, and are receiv'd into his Family, upon Condition, that we walk up to our Christian Profession, and live in Newness of Life, according to the Holy Rules of it : And if any die immediately after this solemn Profession of the Christian Religion, and Admission into it ; as they are counted Righteous only for the Merit of Jesus, they will be so dealt with for ever. But if they live and enter upon Action, it is incumbent upon them to fulfil their Christianity, and to approve themselves worthy and faithful, or to perform the Conditions, upon which they hold their Christianity : For otherwise, though they are counted Righteous before God upon their Admission into it, yet for want of Faithfulness in it, they may perish for ever from the right Way. *Now the Just shall live by Faith ; but if any man draw back, my Soul shall have no Pleasure in him.*

Heb. 10. 38.

2. As this may denote the Favour we shall receive in the Day of Judgment, when our Work shall be done, and our Accounts admitted, and we shall be counted Righteous, for the Sake of the Merit of Jesus only ; it will be absolute and irreverfible. Now we are upon our Warfare and Trial ; and as we acquit our selves, we may be counted Righteous before God through Christ, or not. For upon our owning of Christ, and submitting to be governed by his Gospel, we are engag'd to live according to our Christian Faith and

Article
XI.Jam. 2. 22,
23.

Principles, and must bring our Tempers and Lives up to a Conformity to the Gospel. It was a most just and equitable Condition of the Covenant of Grace, that those that enter into it, and hope to receive Benefit by it, should testify their Dependence upon God, their Care to please him, and give some good Proofs of their being qualified, and dispos'd by Obedience for Justification. And therefore as this may relate to the final Sentence of the Judge, by which Christians will be declar'd Righteous for ever, only for the Merit of our Lord Jesus Christ: Our Faith must be a practical Principle in us, or such a firm Belief of the Gospel, as engages us sincerely in performing the Conditions of it; and which in the great Day will be found and declar'd for the Sake of Jesus, our Righteousness, and rewarded as if we had been perfect in our Obedience. *Seest thou how Faith wrought with his (Abraham's) Works? And by Works was Faith made perfect, and the Scripture was fulfilled, which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for Righteousness, and he was called the Friend of God.*

III. Though we are obliged to live up to our Christian Profession, we cannot challenge any Acceptance, upon Consideration of what we do; for we are counted Righteous, not for our own Works or Deservings, but by Faith; or not for our own Merits, but for the Merit of Jesus Christ. Works that deserve, are perfect Works, which by their own intrinsic Goodness and Value can merit so much as to render us Righteous in the Sight of God. Such Works we cannot perform being Sinners, and unable to offer any Thing that is perfect in our own Behalf; and these Deservings are oppos'd in the Article to Faith, which denotes that Christian Belief and Practice, which is attended with Weakness and Imperfection, which through the Grace of God in Christ passes for Duty, and will be accepted in his Blood; but consider'd alone by it self, is imperfect, and can have no Merit in it, and without Christ can never entitle us to Favour. Now as our Faith in this Sense, through the Merits of Christ shall be counted our Righteousness: Our own Works or Deservings cannot be our Righteousness: For when we have done our best, we are unprofitable Servants, did but our Duty in an imperfect Manner, and are wholly beholden to the Mercy of God for Acceptance. But that we may see how imperfect and refusable our Works and Deservings are, I will consider them as perform'd by Heathens or Christians.

Rom. 1. 21;

I. Our Ancestors in Heathenism could not be counted Righteous before God, for their own Works or Deservings. For Sinners, such as they were, could not expiate for their Sins; Sinners alienated and estranged from God, were not like to please him, and those that were to every good Work reprobate, could offer nothing truly good: But had they been more able than they were, they had nothing to offer, but what they had receiv'd, or which was their Duty to do, and which could bear no Proportion to the Greatness of the Divine Majesty. The Heathen in our Days are as incapable as formerly, and what they do is as imperfect; all their Righteousness is so far from being deserving, that it is as filthy Rags before God. *Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thank-*

thankful, but became vain in their Imaginations, and their foolish Heart was darkened.

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2. Works perform'd by us Christians, fall very much short of Merit strictly taken ; for either what we do as Christians, is good in it self, or not ; if in it self good and meritorious, how does it become such ? Is not our Obedience according to the Laws of the Gospel ? Are we not bound to act as the Children of God ? And are we not, when we have done all that we can, imperfect and weak, and no farther acceptable, than as we are the Servants of Christ ? Though therefore our Actions may be of a better Nature than those of Heathens, we do nothing but what we are obliged to do, and which not done, may be our Condemnation : And can we merit by being Dutiful ? Or merit by Prayer, when we are bound to pray ? Merit by Charity, when we are bound to be charitable ? Can Abstinence merit, when I am commanded to fast ? Or Justice merit, when I am engag'd to be Righteous ? Either we must call Duty Merit, or we Christians cannot merit ; for what we do is our Duty, and what we do, we do it through Grace, and not by our own Strength ; and when it is done, it is no farther valuable, than as it is recommended by the Merits of Jesus. It is therefore a Cheat or Mistake to call that meritorious, which is defective in its self, and no farther acceptable than as its Defects are supplied by the Merits of our Lord Jesus ; for in a proper and strict Sense, nothing can be meritorious, but his Blood and Obedience. *Who did no Sin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth.*

1 Pet. 2. 22.

IV. This Doctrine is sound and good ; Wherefore that we are saved by Faith only, is a most wholesome Doctrine, and full of Comfort.

I. We are sav'd by Faith only through the Merits of Christ, or for his Sake : That Faith which undertakes to live up to his Gospel, shall be counted their Righteousness, who die immediately after Baptism : Or if they live to enter upon Action, that Faith which engag'd them to live up to Christianity, and governs the Heart and Life according to the Commands of the Gospel, shall be counted our Righteousness ; as the Faith of *Abraham* was counted his. As this Faith standeth in Opposition to all Merit, according to the Promise of the Gospel, it is entitl'd through Christ to Eternal Life, and is of more worth in the Sight of God, than all those pompous Works of Supererogation, by which some claim and expect the Divine Favour. It was in Consideration of this, that the first Reformers asserted, that we are justified by Faith only ; not that they thought a bare Belief was sufficient for Justification, for they maintain'd the Necessity of good Works : But they meant thereby, that Faith in Jesus Christ, which was lively and operative, which commanded the Heart, the Life, and fulfilled the Laws of Christianity, was saving, excluding all Merit or Deservings, which some then challenged, and renouncing all Pretences to it. And therefore they declared that we are justified by Faith only ; which is the same with that which was asserted before, that we are accounted Righteous only for the Merit of Jesus ; or that

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Rom. 5. 1, 2.

we can merit nothing, but trust to the Merits of Christ alone, when we have done all we can for Pardon and Salvation. *Therefore being justified by Faith, we have Peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by Faith into this Grace, where, in we stand, and rejoyce in Hope of the Glory of God.*

2 Cor. 1. 3.

2. This is a most wholesome and sound Doctrine; for it directs us immediately to Christ's Blood for Acceptance, and secures us from the Vanity of pretending to Merit, or the Pride which attends and follows that Conceit; it directs us to look into the Weakness of our own Hearts, to disown in all Humility any Worth in our selves or Actions, and to build all our Confidence in the Promises of Mercy, that are made to us in Christ Jesus, and in that Covenant of Grace that is made in his Blood. For as we know we can do nothing thro' our own Strength, or without Christ, that is pleasing to God: We must depend upon his Blood for Pardon, and his Intercession for Acceptance. And that Doctrine which produces this Sense in us, is wholesome and sound, and will prove saving to the Soul. Thus we can say, *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Comfort.*

Eph. 2. 8.

3. This Doctrine is very full of Comfort to penitent Sinners, and humble Believers. For thus we are satisfy'd that our Sins shall be pardon'd, and our Souls saved. For though we cannot do any thing to Merit, we can believe thro' Grace in Jesus; and as we believe, we do obey; and as we obey, and work out our Salvation, we are assur'd that our imperfect Performances shall be accepted, our weak but sincere Endeavours shall be rewarded; we shall be counted Righteous, as defective as we are, and shall have a Crown of Righteousness bestow'd upon us. And this brings that Consolation with it, that we can rejoice in Hope of that Happiness, which shall be bestow'd upon us in the Great Day, and have Reason to cheer up our selves in our Christian Warfare, let what will befall us; whether we are in Trials and Tribulations, in Temptations or Dangers, we know whom we have trusted, and may look up, for our Redemption draweth nigh, and we that are reputed the Dregs of the World, the Refuse of Men, shall be comforted in the Great Day, and blessed by our Lord. *For by Grace are ye saved through Faith, and that not of your selves, it is the Gift of God.*

From this I shall advise you to go on in Well-doing, and not to be afraid of good Works; and if ye are faithful, to be humble, and to place all your Confidence upon the Merits of Jesus.

1. Go on in Well-doing, and be not weary of it, or negligent in your Christian Warfare; but as ye have begun well, go forward in your Duties, nothing doubting; for he that assisted you, will help you to finish. See then that ye aim at greater Proficiency in Virtue, at higher Attainments in Piety, that ye may perform your Duties from the Heart, and make a farther Progress in Holy Living; that ye may act according to your Talents, improve them to the utmost, and do your best for God. No matter though your Obedience is attended with Weakness, tho' ye are imperfect and defective, if ye are upright in your Christianity, and do your best from the Heart

Heart for God, ye will find Mercy. It was not expected that ye should merit, for then must ye needs go beyond your selves: But ye are commanded to be sincere, and without Rebuke, in an evil World; and what can be done, is your Duty, and will brighten your Crown of Righteousness, and will be your Commendation for ever. Do not therefore the Work of God negligently, but continue to watch, and to be sober; to pray and to live well, and strive to enter in at the straight Gate, in the midst of Reproaches and Slanders, Assaults and Temptations, that ye may at last be counted worthy and faithful. *And besides this, giving all Diligence, add to your Faith Vertue, and to Vertue Knowledge.* Article XI.

2. Be not afraid of good Works; for there is no Danger of meriting. It is impossible that we should deserve any Thing at the Hands of God. As therefore ye are engag'd by Nature and Grace to be as good as ye can, endeavour to abound in good Works: All that ye can do, is but inconsiderable, and little enough to discover the Sincerity of your Hearts: However, labour to do more, and be not turn'd from your Duty, under the Pretence of Merit; because a Servant cannot merit, shall he not be faithful? Or because a Son cannot merit, shall he not be dutiful? Trouble not your Heads then about Merit, but be as humble, as good, and as holy, as 'tis possible, that ye may be cleared through the Blood of Jesus, when ye are judged. Because some have abus'd good Works, and called them meritorious, we are not exempted from our Duties, or excus'd from being Obedient. *The Lord looked down from Heaven upon the Children of Men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy, there is none that doth good, no not one.* Are such like to merit? But they shou'd strive to be better. 2 Pet. 1. 5.

3. If when ye have done well, and in some Measure been faithful, ye grow high-minded, ye may lose your Reward. Be not therefore high-minded, but fear; ye cannot do more than enough for God or your Souls; be not conceited or lifted up; for if ye have done well, ye have done but your Duty, and that perhaps not so exactly, but it might have been done better. But let your Obedience be as uniform as ye can wish; God sees into all your Weakness and Imperfections; and 'tis only thro' his Goodness and Mercy, that any Thing which ye do is accepted. *The Sacrifices of God are a broken Spirit, a broken and contrite Heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.* Psal. 14. 2, 3.

4. When all is done that can be done, put all your Confidence in the Blood and Merits of Jesus. As ye know the Father is well pleased in him, and hath commanded you to submit to him, as your Lord and Saviour; ye may be sure that if ye please him in Newness of Life, ye shall be accepted in him, and as weak, frail, and imperfect as ye are, ye shall be counted Righteous, and dealt with as Faithful for his Sake. *Now the Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting Consolation, and good hope through Grace, comfort your Hearts, and stablish you in every good Word and Work.* Psal. 31. 17.

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ARTICLE XII.

MAT. V. 16.

Let your Light so shine before Men, that they may see your good Works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.

IT can never be thought that the Divine Goodness would license us to sin, or encourage us to be wicked; much less can it be presum'd, that it would contrive the Method how we might be religiously vicious; and under the Pretence of being Servants of Christ, allow us to be the more base. Our Lord teaches quite the contrary, and commands us to be eminently good, and Exemplary in Righteousness. **Let your Light so shine before Men, that they may see your good Works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.**

Which discovers the Sense of the Twelfth Article: Which says, "Albeit that good Works, which are the Fruit of Faith, and follow after Justification, cannot put away our Sins, and endure the Severity of God's Judgment; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively Faith, insomuch that by them a lively Faith may be as evidently known, as a Tree discerned by the Fruit. Whence learn,

I. What Christian good Works are: They are the Fruit of Faith, and follow after Justification.

II. Their Imperfection. Yet they cannot put away Sin, and endure the Severity of God's Judgments.

III. As imperfect as they are, yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God.

IV. From whence they arise and come; they do spring out necessarily from a true and lively Faith.

V. Insomuch that by them a lively Faith may be as evidently known; as a Tree discerned by the Fruit.

I will treat of these severally.

I. We are here inform'd, what Christian good Works are: The Fruit of Faith, they follow after Righteousness.

II. They are the Fruit of Faith, the Product of a firm Belief, that Jesus is the Lord, of a full Perswasion, that if we repent as he invites, and live as he commands, we shall be pardon'd and sav'd. For

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if we verily believe that Jesus is the Son of God; that he came down from Heaven, to seek and to save that which was lost; that he shall judge us according to his Gospel; that if we do good, we shall inherit Everlasting Life; that if we do evil, we shall perish in Hell Fire: If we unfeignedly believe this, and verily think we shall be thus dealt with, we must (if we love our selves) begin an holy Life, and our Faith will produce good Works. *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great Salvation?*

Heb. 2. 3,
the first Part.

2. These good Works follow after Justification. To understand this, we must consider, that there is a Justification, which is made over to us at Baptism, when we enter upon Gospel Service, upon Condition, that we live up to the Covenant of Grace; and there is an absolute Justification, which will be produc'd in our Behalf, when we are judged and cleared by the Grace of the Gospel. Now good Works follow after the first Justification, which we were entitl'd unto at Baptism: For if we sincerely give up our Names, our Hearts, and Lives to Christ, we immediately begin to work out our Salvation, and our Faith produces those good Works, which follow our Justification at Baptism, or that Pardon which was then conditionally granted unto us in the Blood of Jesus, and which we hold our Interest in, upon our good Behaviour till we come to die. And therefore St. Peter exhorts his Hearers, to repent and to be baptiz'd, that they might be pardon'd or justified. *Repent and be baptiz'd every one of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the Remission of Sins, and ye shall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost.*

Act. 2. 38.

II. Though good Works arise from Faith, they are imperfect, and cannot put away Sin, or endure the Severity of God's Judgments, for they are no better than what returning Sinners can perform.

1. There is an Imperfection attends Christian good Works; for as excellent as they may be, they cannot put away Sin, or atone for and expiate Sin: For to put away Sin, is to appease the Divine Wrath, and obtain a Pardon of Sin by some worthy Offering. But good Works cannot thus put away Sin, or procure the Sinner's Pardon; for they are perform'd by Sinners, and cannot remove former Guilt, or cover former Transgressions, or make Amends for former Mistakes. Because I at last do my Duty, may I challenge my Pardon for former Sins? Or because a Saint lives well, may he thereby excuse his former Guilt? How can a little inconsiderable Service put away Sins committed against the Eternal Laws of Righteousness? When a Traytor becomes loyal, does his Loyalty put away his Treason, without the Concurrence of the King's Mercy? And if a Sinner becomes dutiful, can his Duty merit Acceptance? All that he can do, is but the Performance of a Sinner; and though he does his Duty at present, he must be beholden to a Saviour to procure his Pardon. *But now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away Sin, by the Sacrifice of himself.*

Heb. 9. 26,
the latter Part.

2. They are so imperfect, that they cannot endure the Severity of God's Judgment: For should he be extreme to mark what is done amiss, who can be justified in his Presence? The Angels are not

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Psal. 1. 5.

pure in his Eye ; how then can we, that are made out of the Dust, find Acceptance, upon the Account of any Performance ? Can we stand in Judgment, or clear our selves when we are judged ? Our good Works indeed, because enjoin'd by the Gospel, may find Acceptance through Christ ; as a repenting Rebel stands fairest for the King's Mercy ; but they cannot abate of that Severity of Judgment that is due to Sin, unless Mercy steps between, and prevails for their Acceptance, and our Pardon. If God be angry, yea but a little, who is able to stand before him ? The Earth trembles, the Hills melt like Wax, at the Presence of the Lord of the whole Earth. We must not therefore pretend to endure the Severity of his Judgments, but must flee for Refuge to the Lord Jesus, till his Severity abates, and his Judgments are over. *Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in Judgment, nor Sinners in the Congregation of the righteous.*

III. As imperfect as our good Works are, yet they are pleasing and acceptable to God through Christ ; for he hath purchas'd that Covenant of Grace in which we stand, and by which our imperfect good Works are commanded, and shall be rewarded.

Joh. 3. 22.

1. Such good Works are pleasing to God, as he hath commanded. " For we are created in Christ Jesus to good Works. This is the Will of God, even our Sanctification ". The Grace of God hath undertaken to teach us to deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts ; and to live godly, righteously, and soberly, in this present World ; that we may abound in all good Works, and think of and practice every thing that is vertuous and of good Report ; which may testify a Change of Heart and Life, and produce in us a Disposition and Temper truly Christian. When we conform our selves to the Commands and Example of our Lord, we do that which God approves of, and will reward in the future State. This made St. John confident, that his and the Church's Prayers wou'd be heard. *And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him ; because we keep his Commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his Sight.*

2. Such good Works are acceptable through Christ ; for his Sake, God will accept of our imperfect Obedience, and reward our good Works. We are by his Grace enter'd under the Discipline of his Son, and are allowed Opportunities to qualify our selves for a better State : And our good Behaviour does only shew, what Proficients we are, and what Preparation we are in for Mercy. For we must pass through the different Stages, allotted for our Discipline ; we must be Penitents, Believers, Obedient, and continue in well-doing for a time, that we may recover a pious Frame and Temper, and be in an acceptable Condition. And whilst we are thus engag'd, God is delighted with our Proficiency and good Works, and will accept of us upon our Faithfulness to the End, and crown all our Endeavours with Happiness and Glory. But though our good Works thus perform'd in Obedience to Christ, are acceptable through his Blood ; they no more deserve or merit God's Acceptance, than the putting on a decent Garment merits that Honour from a King, who receives a penitent Rebel to Mercy, and raises him to Places of Trust ; for 'tis

'tis Christ alone that puts the Value upon what we do. *Who gave himself for us, that he might Redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works.*

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Tit. 2. 14.

IV. These good Works do spring out necessarily from a true and lively Faith, as was said at first; they are the Fruits of Faith, and a true and lively Faith will necessarily produce them. But because there is so much stress laid upon the Word Necessarily; It will be convenient for me to give you a clear and distinct Apprehension of it, that ye may lye under no Mistake, and may not imagine that ye are forced, or necessitated to bring forth good Works. As Faith is a Christian Vertue, ye cannot pretend, that Faith physically or naturally produces good Works, as Fire Burns; but that when it is allow'd to operate upon the Heart and Life, it does produce them, and the Truth and Life of it may be discerned by them: And yet, as it is the Faith of Man, who is changeable in his Resolutions and Choice; sometimes influenced by Conviction, and sometimes led aside by his Lusts: The true Faith that is in him may degenerate; the Life of it may grow Weak and expire; and he that begun well, may fall away and perish in his Sins; and therefore when we say that a true and lively Faith Necessarily produces good Works, it must be understood with this Caution, that whilst it remains True and Lively, it will produce such good Effects; but if the Truth of it should abate, and the Vigour of it should cease; it cannot be expected that it should have that Influence upon the Heart or the Life, as to engage the Man in Obedience, or continue him in it; and we have Reason to fear, that a true Faith may thus Fail, and that a lively Faith may thus Expire: For we find that many that Believe in Jesus do fall away from him, or at least, are not so careful as they have been, to keep his Commandments: And therefore, it must be granted, that either they never had a true and lively Faith, or that a true and lively Faith may Fail, and Cease to be what it was. But our Lord puts this beyond any Exception, when he tells St. Peter, "That he had prayed, that his Faith might not fail:" All will allow, that St. Peter's Faith was a true and lively Faith, such as was acceptable and saving, and yet he was in danger of failing in his Faith; and had not our Saviour prayed for him, it might have failed, and he might not only have deny'd his Lord, as he did, but might have perish'd in his Sin: What was that Apostle's Case, is the Case of every Christian; they may have a true and lively Faith, which unless they take heed, may fail; for their Faith is their own Consent to that which is credible, their own Belief and Perswasion; and though they Believe at present, unless they Watch, Pray, and take Heed, they fall away in the Time of Temptation, and lose their Reward: For this Reason our Saviour calls upon us, "To Watch and Pray, to strive to enter in at the streight Gate, to labour for the Meat which endureth to everlasting Life;" That we may not depend upon any fatal Necessity, or trust to any necessary Operations: But as Faith is our Act, we may keep it up by true Reasoning and Devotion, and may

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Luke 22. 32.

live according to it ; for whilst it is such an active Principle in us, good Works will necessarily spring from it ; but if that Fails, our Obedience will Fail, and we may fall away from our Lord, and incur his Displeasure for ever. *But I have prayed for thee, that thy Faith fail not ; and when thou art Converted, strengthen thy Brethren.*

V. A lively Faith may be as evidently known by good Works, as a Tree by the Fruit ; for as when we see the Fruit good, we know that the Tree was good that bare it : So when we find the Christian's Life to be Fruitful in good Works, that he carefully performs his Duty, faithfully Works out his Salvation, and conscientiously goes forward in well doing ; we have Cause to believe that his Faith is true and lively, that he is Sincere and Upright ; and that like a Tree planted by the River Side, he bringeth forth his Fruit in good Season ; and discovers that he is in earnest a Servant of the Lord Jesus. Not that he as Necessarily brings forth good Works, as a Tree good Fruit ; for the Tree cannot but bear that sort of Fruit that belongs to it ; but Man is a free Agent, at Liberty to believe or not believe, and when he believes, at Liberty to persevere in Well-doing, and to bring forth good Works, or not to persevere ; and therefore we find, that Hypocrites will pretend to Believe, and disguise themselves under the Appearance of good Works, and that too many that were really active in Religion, grow weary in well doing ; but if Faith remains lively, and the Man sincere, he will as certainly abound in good Works, as he is under the Government of an active Principle, and as a Tree produces good Fruit. *For a good Tree bringeth not forth corrupt Fruit, neither doth a corrupt Tree bring forth good Fruit : For every Tree is known by his own Fruit ; for of Thorns Men do not gather Figs, nor of a Bramble-Bush gather they Grapes.*

Luk. 6. 43, 44.

From this Account I must take occasion to caution you, that ye do not trust to bare Faith ; that ye examine your Faith by your Behaviour ; and that upon your Sincerity in keeping God's Commandments, ye have Cause to hope for Mercy.

I. Ye may not trust to a bare Faith, or think your selves safe, because ye Believe ; for Truth is of that Nature, that it forces Conviction upon Evil Men ; nay, upon evil Spirits, who Believe and Tremble, and cannot but own the Power and Judgments of God ; but your Faith must proceed farther, it must put you upon Christian Action and Obedience, as ye design it should bring you to Salvation, and must Oblige you to remain Faithful to the End. What will it avail you to Believe as Evil Men Believe ? Can their Faith save them ? Or what will it profit you to Believe and Tremble with Evil Spirits ? Can their Faith deliver them from Chains and Torment ? Your Faith must be true and lively, fixed upon the Lord Jesus, and fruitful in good Works, and then through him it will be found saving to the Soul. Consider therefore the Nature of your Faith, that it may be found to your Praise, and the Glory

Glory of God. *What doth it profit, my Brethren, though a Man say he hath Faith, and have not Works, can Faith save him?*

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2. Judge of your selves by the Nature of your Faith, and never presume to flatter your selves in the Commission of any known Sin, as if the same was consistent with a saving Condition. For if your Faith is not true and sound enough to break off your Sins, and to engage you in a vertuous Life, it cannot profit you in the Day of Wrath. Or if your Faith is not such an active Principle in you, as produces good Works, and quickens you in your Christian Obedience, what Advantage can ye in earnest expect from it? Judge therefore your selves, compare your Lives with your Faith, and pass a righteous Sentence. Do ye really live as those that believe in Jesus Christ? Walk as those that expect him in Judgment. If ye do not, all your Faith will avail but little in the Sight of God. *For as the Body without the Spirit is dead, so Faith without Works is dead also.*

Jam. 2. 14.

Jam. 2. 26.

3. If ye are sincere in keeping God's Commandments, ye have cause to hope for Mercy. For your Faith is then true and lively, and your Actions are pleasing and acceptable; and there is nothing wanting to compleat your Happiness, but Faithfulness to the End. See then that ye persist in well-doing, and bring forth more Fruit. *Ye are my Friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*

Joh. 15. 14.

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JOHN XV. 4.

As the Branch cannot bear Fruit of it self, except it abide in the Vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

AS when we were without Christ, we were Aliens from the Commonwealth of *Israel*, and Strangers from the Covenant of Grace; so in this State we were unable to perform that which might be acceptable to God through that Covenant, or agreeable to his Will in Christ Jesus. **As the Branch cannot bear fruit of it self, except it abide in the Vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me.**

Which plainly shews, that it is Christ, which makes all our Fruit acceptable to God; and gives us the intended Sense of the Thirteenth Article, which says, that "Works done before the Grace of Christ, and the Inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God; forasmuch as they spring not of Faith in Jesus Christ. Neither do they make Men meet to receive Grace, or (as the School Authors say) deserve Grace of Congruity; yea, rather for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the Nature of Sin". Consider,

- I. Works done before the Grace of God in Christ, and the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost, of his Spirit.
- II. The Reason why such Works are not pleasant to God; forasmuch as they spring not of Faith in Jesus Christ.
- III. Their Incapacity to merit the Divine Favour: Neither do they make Men meet to receive Grace, or, as the School Authors say, merit the Grace of Congruity.
- IV. Their Unworthiness; yea rather, because they are not done, as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the Nature of Sin. Such are the Works done before Justification, or before we are baptiz'd, and entit'led to our Pardon.

I. Consider the Works done before the Grace of God, and the Inspiration of his Spirit, by the meer Strength of corrupted Nature, without any Assistance of the Grace of God; which may be Works of Charity and Friendship, Fidelity and Honesty, Sobriety and Chastity, Humility and Self-denial, in which many Heathens, who knew

knew not God in Christ, were Eminent and Signal; and for which they are commended in History, and applauded by Posterity. Now though it is difficult to imagine how such excellent Actions can be done without the Grace of Christ, who was promised to all the Race of Adam, or without the Inspiration and Concurrence of the Spirit, which is not confin'd by Means, but at liberty to assist where, whom, when and how it pleases; and can as well inspire Heathens to perform great and worthy Actions as others; yet allowing that some such Works are done in Appearance at least, without the Grace of Christ, or the Inspiration of his Spirit; they are not in themselves pleasing or acceptable to God, because mix'd up with a great deal of Vanity and Ostentation, and done by those that are Strangers to the Covenant of Grace, Admirers of Idols, and in other respects Degenerate and Vicious. *Wherefore remember that ye being in times past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision; that at that time ye were without Christ, having no hope, and without God in the World.* Eph. 2, first part 11, 12.

II. The grand Reason why such Works are not pleasant to God, is this; For as much as they spring not of Faith in Jesus Christ; those that do them have lost all Knowledge of the promised Seed, which was to break the Serpent's Head, and were forsaken by the Spirit of God, and left to their own brutish Fancies and Inclinations. They have no Faith in the Son of God; and no Inspirations, or holy Motions from his Spirit, but are under the Conduct of their own vain Hearts, at Disposal of their own carnal Thoughts; and if they do any thing good, it is more by chance than choice; or if they happen to chuse well, they pursue their Design for Ostentations or Praise, for Profit or Pleasure, and spoil the Good they do with the mixture of Pride or Lust: So that though the Works are seemingly Good, and if perform'd in another manner, might have been pleasing to God; yet for as much as they are done, not by Faith in the Messias, nor by the Motion of his Spirit; but for Interest or Ostentation, to get an Estate, or to gain Fame, to enlarge Revenues or Honour; they are refuseable and defective, and though they seem to be good, they are not good; though they have the fine Appearance of Virtue, they are not Virtue; and though they seem to be the Effects of Grace, they are done without the Grace of God, and are not pleasant to him: That which is truly Good, and worthy of Acceptance, must be done for a good End, according to the Laws of Righteousness, in a good Manner, with all the Circumstances that ought to cloath a good Action; but meer Nature left to herself, depriv'd of all Knowledge of the Messias, and destitute of all Assistance from the Spirit, cannot accomplish such Works; and those that are left under her Government, without the Grace of God in Christ, are not able to do any Thing that may be pleasant to God. For though no doubt he rejoices in all his Works, and loves any Work that is truly Good, and in every respect agreeable to his Righteous Mind, yet he cannot approve of Iniquity, under the appearance of Goodness; or value

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Psal. 5. 4. 5.

value Vice, which demurely cloaths it self like Virtue. *For thou art not a God that hast pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee; thou hatest all workers of iniquity.*

III. The Incapacity of these Works to Merit the Divine Favour: Neither do they make Men meet to receive Grace; or (as the School Authors say) deserve Grace of Congruity: There is a great difference between a Disposition to receive Grace, and the deserving of it; for Men in the State of Nature, that are civiliz'd, are in a better Disposition to hearken to the Gospel, than the savage and wild *Indians*; and those that were prepar'd by the Promises of the *Messias*, as the *Patriarchs* and *Profelytes* amongst the *Jews*, with all the *Jewish* People, were in a more likely Condition to attend unto the Gospel, than those civiliz'd *Heathens*, that had never any Knowledge of it, or amongst whom the Tradition of it was quite worn out: And accordingly, when the Apostles spake to the People, as many as were dispos'd, set in order, or fitted for Eternal Life, believ'd; and these must be judg'd to be the good Ground, or the Worthy, which our Saviour spake of: But though some Men may be in a far better Disposition, or Preparation for the Gospel than others, none can merit or deserve the Grace of it; none being able to offer that perfect Service which may deserve such a Favour. For this Reason our Church very wisely explains herself, when she asserts, That good Works do not make Men meet to receive Grace, that is, to deserve the Grace of Congruity (as the School-men talk); for there may be a Disposition or Preparation in Men to receive the Gospel, which never could or can deserve it; for no good Works can merit, at the Hands of God, the Assistance to do better: Neither is it congruous, that he should, in consideration of what is done, or for the Worth of it, confer the Ability or Opportunity to do more: If indeed the Spirit of God, out of his abundant Goodness, assisted *Heathens* in doing such Works, he does thereby set their Souls in order to receive the Gospel when propos'd to them; he raises up a Readiness and Conviction to comply with the Will of God farther, and to proceed in Righteousness, as Information and Grace shall be given; but this is not done in regard of any Work, or Merit in those Works, or in those Men; but of his own Goodness and Mercy, in order to set forward the Salvation of Men; but if such Works were done by the Strength of corrupted Nature, without the Grace of God preventing or assisting, they are not strictly and properly Good Works, and cannot, with all the show they make, deserve the Grace of Congruity, or merit further Information, or make Men meet to receive Grace; for such as did them, were as much averse to the Gospel as before; as appear'd in the Prejudices of the *Polite Jews* and *Gentiles*, upon the Promulgation of it. But if after this, it be said, that the Works of some *Heathens* are as good in themselves, of the same Nature, as well consider'd and directed to proper Ends, and as well weighed and measured by the Rules of Righteousness, as those of *Christians*; and consequently, that such Works must, in their own Tendency, produce a Disposition in the Heart for more Grace: I must reply, that

that if any such Works can be found, they are wrought by the Grace of Christ in them, "Who enlighteneth every Man that cometh into the World", and whose gracious Spirit is not tied up to a Party of Men; and deny'd to all others: he is promised to Christians, and may impart his Assistance to Heathens, and can display his Power to *Balaam*, to *Sibyl*, to whom and where he pleases. And though we Christians have most of his Assistance ensured to us, and may depend on him, upon our Improvements, for more Grace; yet without injuring him we may believe, that he is ready to encourage all that bear the Image of God, and do not slight his Motions: And the difference that is seen amongst the Heathens, and the moral Vertues that are found in them, (if they are truly Good) are effected by him, who Breaths into them a Measure of the Spirit of Righteousness, and by inward Impulses stirs them up, and enables them to be good; and if such Heathens are in a better Disposition and Order for Christianity, they do not deserve such Additions of Favour, or Merit so much Grace; for they did but their Duty in living rationally, and complying with the secret Operations of the Spirit: And thus take the Works of Heathens in what Sense you please, they do not deserve the Grace of Congruity; for if they are truly good, and in every respect acceptable, we must ascribe them to the Spirit, who thus prepares the Hearts of Men for God; but they cannot deserve any Favour: But if they are only seemingly good, the result of corrupted Nature; they are done before the Grace of God, and the Inspiration of his Spirit, and are refusable, imperfect, and not sufficient to merit any Favour: That is, they are the Works of those that are Enemies to God and his Righteousness. *Rom. 5. 10.*
When we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son. the 1st Part.

IV. The Unworthiness of such Works is so great, that they have the Nature of Sin; yea, rather, for that they are not done, as God hath willed and commanded them to be done; we doubt not, but they have the Nature of Sin: For whatever falls short of being done according to the Commandments of God, must be of that Nature: For Sin is a Transgression of the Law, and the least Deviation from it, strickly taken, has something of Sin in it; and therefore, we doubt not, but the Works which the best of natural Men can do, must have the Nature of Sin, and cannot stand in Judgment; but if carefully examin'd, they will be found Defective in some respect or other, in the End, Regularity, or Circumstance which the Law requires, and must be fill'd up, before they can be excus'd from Sin: We know that Fasting, Prayer, and Charity, or Almsgiving may be turned into Sin amongst us Christians; when they are done out of Vain-Glory, or for some base, sinister, or unworthy purposes; much more may the same sort of Actions, or any that carry the appearance of Vertue, be found Sin in those that know not God, and obey not the Lord Jesus Christ, or have no Measure of the Spirit to guide and assist them in the performance, as must be supposed by us, when we declare, that we doubt not, but that they have the

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Nature of Sin : For we mean thereby, that they are not done exactly according to the Commandment of God ; but if we mean (when we say, they are not done as God hath willed and commanded) that they are not done according to the express Laws of the Gospel, by which they shall be judged at the last Day, or as Christ hath willed and commanded, which seems to be the particular Intent of the Article ; then they have the Nature of Sin, because they spring not of Faith in Jesus Christ, or are not done from an hearty Belief of his Authority and Power, and in Obedience to him, whom God hath appointed to be Lord and Saviour ; for without him all are counted Sinners, and fall short of the Glory of God ; and how can Sinners do any thing that is fit for God to receive, or worthy of his Acceptance ? In this sense God hath concluded them all in Unbelief, that he may have Mercy upon all ; and as nothing is pleasing to him, but as it is related to his Son ; so no Works can be pleasant in his Sight, that are not the Fruits of Faith in his Son, and the effects of his Son's Grace and Spirit. So that the conclusion is this ; either those good Works which are done in a natural State, are produc'd by the concurrence of God's Spirit, which can prevent and assist whom, when, and how it pleases ; or by the meer remains and force of corrupted Nature : If by the Spirit or Grace of Christ, they are good, and for his Sake they will be accepted ; and this by the way caused the primitive Fathers to speak so favourably of some eminent Heathens. If by the reliques of Strength in corrupted Nature, they are imperfect, defective ; and as good as they seem to be, have the Nature of Sin, as not done from a good Principle, from the Love of God, or for his Glory, not conform'd exactly to his Laws, with an intention to please, but done for some By-ends, in Imitation of others famous in their Time, for the security of some Interests, the Satisfaction of some Lust, or for Fame and Vain-Glory, and are not measured by the Laws of Righteousness, which are the Standards and Rates for all Morality ; but are stain'd by many vicious collateral Actions, and are so far from deserving Grace, that they cannot clear the Sinner when he is judged. *But without Faith it is impossible to please him ; for he that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

Heb. II. 6.

From this Explanation of the Article, I shall direct you to look to your own Works, that they may be wrought in God, to cherish and improve the Inspirations and Assistances of the Holy Spirit ; and when ye have done well, to pray for and expect more Assistance ; for your Condition is not as the Heathens, for ye are under Grace and the Influences of the Spirit.

1. Ye see how defective the Works of Men are without Christ, look therefore the more carefully to your own Works, that they may be wrought in God, and prove pleasant to him ; let it be your design and aim to live up to the Gospel of Christ, and to govern your Hearts and Lives by it ; and let no Hypocrisy or Dissimulation dwell in you, or turn you into By-paths, or cause you to propose any worldly Ends to your selves ; but do all to the Glory of God, and for

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for the good of your Souls, and endeavour more and more to fulfil that Righteousness which is expected from you, that ye may walk in Newness of Life; let it not be said that the Lives of some Heathens appear more vertuous and worthy than yours, or that some *Pharisees* seem to be more wary and circumspect in their Behaviour than you can be. But as he which hath called you is Holy, so be ye Holy in all manner of Conversation; and measure all your Thoughts, Words and Actions, by the Laws of Christ; that ye may be in earnest, what ye seem to be, and may be found faithful upon his Appearance. Why may not ye take as much Care, and be at as much Pains to please God in Sincerity, as others are to appear Religious? Or is it not as possible for you to become good and holy through Grace in Heart and Life, as for others to seem and appear Pious? Be delighted therefore to add to your Faith, Virtue, and Work as those that have the Day before them; as those that must now or never prepare for Eternity, and be not so solicitous to get the Name of Christian, as to be so in good earnest; and then your Works being wrought in God, will be pleasing to him, when others are rejected. *So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the Law of Liberty.*

Jam. 2. 12

2. I must request you to cherish and improve the Inspirations and Assistances of the Holy Spirit; for ye are the Servants of Christ, and have a measure of the Spirit given you to profit withal. Take heed therefore how ye Walk, that ye may not receive those Inspirations in Vain, or remain stupid and negligent under the Motions of them; if meer Heathens transported by some illapses of the Spirit, could do well (as some think they did;) how much more may ye do better, being under the constant Assistances and Guidance of it? Ye have that Word before you which the Holy Spirit inspir'd Men to write; ye feel the Sacred Inspiration of it in your Souls, and may be sensible of those pious Motions it raised up in your Hearts, and cannot (would ye attend, yield, and be guided) be ignorant of those Assistances it affords to guide you into Righteousness. Be careful to give heed to those Holy Motions, yield to those good impulses, pursue those Christian Desires it raises up, effect what those Holy Resolutions, it leads you to, may design, and never grieve this Holy Friend, never quench the Fire he inflames you with; but as here ye are convinced and resolv'd to be led by him, be sure elsewhere to walk as Christians, that ye may be sav'd through Christ. *And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, by which ye are sealed to the Day of Redemption.*

Eph. 4. 30.

3. When ye have been sincere and done well, pray for, and expect more Assistance; for as what ye do is pleasant to God, he will enable you to go forward in well-doing, to grow in Grace, and to abound in Righteousness: He that had Five Talents, had the more Work to perform: as we have more than Heathens, more Work is expected from us; and if we pray, we shall have more Grace in time of need. *For unto every one that bath, shall be given, and he shall have abundance.*

Matt. 25. 29,
the 1st. Part

ARTICLE XIV.

MATT. VII. 7.

Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men.

IT is a Sign of a vain and proud Mind, when it pretends to go beyond Duty, or to over-do it. For however extraordinary it may seem in the Eye of others, it is in Reality impossible to be done, and whilst the Man aims to be by himself in Devotion, he falls short of what was necessary. Our Lord says, **Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men.** Which leads me to the Sense of the Fourteenth Article.

“ Voluntary Works, besides, over and above God’s Commandments, which they call Works of Supererogation, cannot be taught without Arrogancy and Impiety : For by them Men do declare, that they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for his Sake, than of bounden Duty is required. Whereas Christ saith plainly, When ye have done all Things that are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable Servants ”. Here observe,

I. What Voluntary Works are ; such as are besides, over, and above God’s Commandments.

II. The Danger in teaching them ; they cannot be taught without Arrogancy, Pride, and Impiety.

III. The Arrogancy lies in this ; by them Men do declare, that they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for his Sake than of bounden Duty is required.

IV. This is directly contrary to our Saviour’s Doctrine, who says, “ When ye have done all Things that are commanded you, say, “ we are unprofitable Servants ”.

I. What Voluntary Works are ; such as are besides, or over and above God’s Word, or Works of our own Choice and Wills, which we think we have no Obligation upon us to perform, and yet which we chuse to make an Offering to God, besides what he hath commanded : That we may know the natural Meaning of *Besides*, our Church explains it by *over and above* God’s Commandments, which we present to him as a Freewill-Offering of our own, over and above what was our Duty to do. Such were the Works which the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* directed the devout *Jews* unto ; as the

the Washing of Cups, Basons, and Tables; making of Vows, and devoting their Estates to pious Uses; and washing themselves after they had been in the Market; and other Traditions, which were the Commandments of Men. And these Works were so superstitiously admir'd, and insisted upon, that it was usual with them to break God's Commandments, when they stood in Competition with their Traditions, and to break his known Laws, in offering him that which he never requir'd. Just as some in our Days would commit Fornication rather than marry, or refuse to work, that they may appear to be the more devout Beggars, or vow to be poor, that they may indulge their Sloth. It was common for the Jews to deny their Parents Relief, because they had vow'd to give what they had to God, and to make their Cups shine; when their Souls were full of Uncleanness. Such were their Voluntary Works, or Works of Supererogation, which must needs be excellent in their Opinions, because out of the common Road of Duty, and invented on purpose to serve an extraordinary Fit of Devotion. But to such our Lord says, *Full-well ye reject the Commandment of God, that ye may keep your own Traditions.*

Mark 7. 9.

II. The Danger in teaching such Works, or recommending them to the Practice of the People: They cannot be taught without manifest Arrogancy and Impiety.

1. Not without manifest Arrogancy, Haughtiness, and Pride. For what does that Man think of himself, who pretends to give that to God, which he never enjoin'd? Is he more able to discern what pleases God, than Himself? Or can he offer and give that which he never receiv'd? Or are his Inventions and Free-Will Offerings more grateful to God, than his own Commandments? Will the Gift to the Altar, which Moses never enjoin'd, be better than honouring of Parents? Or is a single Life stain'd with Uncleanness, more honourable than chaste Matrimony? Or is a bright and clear Cup more welcome to the Spirit, than a clean Heart? Or can Poverty vowed for the Sake of Christ, be more glorious than honest Labour, which procures Bread? Who is not proud and arrogant, that teacheth Men to make such Offerings? Or are they not haughty that lay aside the most substantial Duties, and busy themselves in such voluntary Undertakings? Is not Man subject to his Maker, under his Government, and at his Disposal? And is it not thence impossible for him to do any thing over and above his Duty? *Making the Word of God of none effect, through your Tradition which ye have delivered.*

Mark 7. 13,
the first Part.

2. Such Works cannot be taught without Impiety: As much as they seem to be done for the Honour of God, they are dishonourable to him; and as much as those that do them wou'd appear more devout than others, they are wicked. For is not that Impiety, which dishonours God's Laws, and under the Pretence of honouring him, encourages Sin and Wickedness? Is not God's Authority lessen'd, his Government slighted? Are not his Laws rejected, when Men's Traditions are cry'd up, and are preferr'd before the Service of Christ? when God's reveal'd Will is dispensed with, and those Vows are called

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led sacred, which are against Reason and Grace; nay, when the plain Rules of Morality are laid aside, and the worst of Vices are tolerated and encouraged under the Pretence of Religion? If this is not Impiety, or Wickedness in an high Degree, what can be called by that Name? And ye have Reason to suspect it, whenever such Voluntary Works are cried up; for as their Credit rises, for the most part the Reputation of God's Law falls and sinks; and the more Stress is put upon them, the more immoral are the Lives of Men. For when once they think they can give God more than he commands, they presume that he will be mightily taken with it, and for Love of such an extraordinary Favour, pass by their demure Vices, and connive at their black Misdeeds. Thus when the *Jew* had made his Estate Corban, he thought it such a Prize, that he was no longer bound to honour his Parents, and that he might be disobedient with a good Grace. When another by the same Instigation kept his Dishes and Plate clean, he look'd upon it as such a wonderful Piece of Sanctity, that would easily atone for the Filth and Corruption of his Heart. And thus as Voluntary Works gain'd Applause, the Practice of Holiness was laid aside, and Religion was plac'd in Voluntary Offerings: And this Humour prevail'd so far, that at last there was scarcely any Purity of Heart, or Righteousness of Life, no Faith or Vertue in a manner to be found upon the Earth. And thus it will be, whenever the Commandments of Men are preferr'd before the Commandments of God: Men being more apt to place the Stress of Religion upon external Compliances, than in the Regulation of Heart and Life, according to the Will of God. Our Saviour tells the *Jews*, that when any of them had devoted his Estate to God, tho' his Parents were ready to starve; *Ye suffer him no more to do ought for his Father or Mother.*

Mark 7. 12.

III. The Arrogancy lies in this: By such Works Men do declare, that they do not only render to God as much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for his Sake, than of bounden Duty is required; which is arrogant and impious to an high Degree. For what Man upon Earth can with Reason pretend to do as much as he is bound to do; much less may he boast of that which was not required, or made his Duty before? It must therefore be Arrogancy to the Purpose, to declare that they can do their Duty, and more than is their Duty.

VIII. 'Tis arrogant to declare, that they render to God as much as they are bound to do. For where can the Limits of Obedience be fixed? Are we not pre-engaged to do our best for God? Are not all our Faculties given? And when we have done all that we can with our greatest Application, is there not more behind to be done? Are we not still upon Service? And do not our Duties increase with our Days? And will they not remain upon us, whilst our Lives last? What Arrogancy is it therefore to declare, that they render unto God as much as they are bound to do, when the Obligation reaches all the Powers of our Souls, and does not terminate till Death? I have heard of those that have asserted Perfection attainable, who nevertheless will grant that they are upon Service during Life; and bound

bound to proceed in Duty till their Work is done, and their Time ended; and so must all own, while they are dependent Creatures, and accountable to their Lord for their Faculties and Talents, their Time and Grace; and we cannot plead we have render'd to God all that we are bound to do for him, till our Race is run, and our Accounts are called for, and we can be no longer his Stewards. *And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? Give an account of thy Stewardship, for thou mayest be no longer Steward.*

Luk. 16. 2.

2. It is great Arrogancy and Impiety to declare, that they do more for God's Sake, than of bounden Duty is required: it smells rank of Pride; for what can Man give to God, that was not at first given to him? Or how does he become so great, that he can offer that to God, which was none of his? And 'tis very impious too, as if Men were Self-sufficient, and could present that to God, which he is beholden to them for, or which he could not command: But where is that to be found, that we are not obliged to perform? By what Strength is it to be done? In what Season is it to be presented? For without doubt, if God gives them Strength, 'tis done by his Assistance: And if he continues Life, and affords the Time, 'tis done thro' his Assistance, in his Season, and is no more than his Service, done by his Servant: So that if Men will be thus presumptuous, and boast of such voluntary Works, let them forbear to glory till they have Strength of their own, which they never receiv'd of God; and till they can command Time, live as long as they please, and dispose of themselves without controul, and without Dread and Fear; for if they are not Self-sufficient in these Particulars, 'tis unreasonable to offer at such Works; and if they are in any measure Pious, they will be asham'd of such Pretences, which are but the vain Boastings of proud and wicked Men: But if they are Vicious, their Offerings are not worthy of Acceptance, but may be rejected with Indignation. *When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?*

Isa. 1. 12.

IV. This Declaration is directly contrary to our Saviour's Doctrine, who says, "When ye have done all things that are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable Servants. This is the plain and full decision of this Controversy, which with one word cuts asunder all the formal Claims and Challenges, that may be put in, or made by proud and impious Men to such Works, and leaves them in their Folly: For he who made us, who gave us what we have, who knows the best we can do; and what in Reason may be expected from us, assures us, that when we have done all which is commanded, we are but unprofitable Servants; and have done no more than what we were bound to do; and as he says it, we may believe him; as he commands us to own our selves unprofitable, we may be sure that after all our Endeavours, we do not exceed; for He that is Truth it self, and weighs all our Abilities, and knows our Make, would never enjoin us to be so modest, as to tell a Lye; or put us upon that Diffimulation and Hypocrisy, as to say that which we know to be false; if therefore the

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the best are but unprofitable Servants, when they have been the most diligent and careful, and are unfefficient to make such Offerings, what are the worst? How can the Vicious pretend to be so Eminent in good Works, or those that are inferior to them, glory in their Performances? If the Holiest and most Religious, can do no more than what is their Duty, the rest that come behind them in Goodness, can never offer any thing that is worthy of acceptance. We may then lay aside all Thoughts of Works of Super-erogation (which in Times of Popery made such a Noise in the World, and against which this Article is design'd) being unable to offer unto God any thing of that Nature; and being, in his Esteem, in our best Estate but unprofitable Servants. Will any Man thank his Servant for doing his Duty? Or can the Lord of all, be beholden to Men, when they are Obedient? Our Saviour speaks in the same manner, when he brings in the Master commanding his Servant to wait upon him.

Luk. 17. 9, 10. *Doth he thank that Servant, because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not; so likewise ye, when ye shall have done all these things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable Servants; we have done that which was our duty to do.*

From this Account of the Article, ye must give me leave to tell you, that we are so far from being able to do more than our Duty, that we do not do that as we ought; that it will be more to our Commendation, when we sincerely do what we are commanded, as well as we can; and that if we do that well, we shall soon see into the Vanity of these Pretences.

1. We are so far from being able to do more than our Duty, that we do not do our Duty as we ought. Our first Reformers did well to pull down the Loftiness of proud Men, by declaring against Works of Super-erogation; but they little thought that we should run into the other extreme, and neglect to do our Duty; For though we cannot offer more to God than what is commanded, shall we not offer that which is commanded? Or because the Papists magnify'd good Works too much, and gloried in their Offerings, shall not we perform our Duty, and be Fruitful in those good Works which we are commanded to abound in? But thus it is; our Forefathers, when they were deliver'd from the Corruptions of Rome, abhorred their Arrogancy and Impiety, in pretending to do more than was Commanded; and we are come to that pass, that we will not do what is our Duty, which God has commanded, and the neglect of which he has threaten'd to punish. We pretend to be zealous against Rome, while we come short of sincere Christians; we cry up Religion, and will not perform the Duties of it; we can zealously exclaim against Works of Merit, when we willingly neglect to do what is commanded. What can be the meaning of this? Or what do we design by it? Though ye cannot do more than your Duty, I hope ye will allow, that ye may do your Duty; and though ye declare against the Pride of Rome, I hope ye intend to be faithful Servants of Christ. Either therefore practise what ye are commanded, and do what can be done, or never pretend to be Religious; for at the same time ye condemn the Vanity of those that pretend to do more than can be done,

done, ye own, that what is to be done, ought to be done, and condemn your selves for Presumption and Neglect: For he that knows his Master's Will, and does it not, is as much to blame, as he that pretends to overdo it, and much more; for he does nothing, whilst the other does something, though in an unbecoming manner. I must entreat you therefore to do your Duty in your Stations with Uprightness of Heart, that ye may be accepted. *And that Servant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.*

2. It will be more for our Commendation, when we sincerely do what we are commanded, as well as we can; and laying aside all Thoughts of doing more than Duty, take all imaginable Care to do our best for God. We all may know, that our Talents are given us to be improved, our Faculties to be used, our Time to be well-spent, and that in a little while the Day of Grace will be over; and as we know thus much, we must count it our Duty to improve our Talents, to use our Faculties, and to spend our Time in the Service of God, and to please him as well as we can in Newness of Life; and if we are but upright in doing what can be done for our Souls, we may be sure, our hearty Endeavours will be accepted, and the Memory of Duties well done, will afford us more Pleasure at the last, than all vain Pretences to Merit, or voluntary Offerings: Let us then be Humble and Obedient, that at the Appearance of our Lord, we may be declared Faithful. *His Lord said unto him (that had done his Duty in improving Five Talents,) Well done thou good and faithful Servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* Matt. 25. 21

3. If we do our Duty well, we shall soon see the Vanity of all other Pretences, and in humility possess our Souls; for the more faithful we are, the more sensible we shall be of our Unworthiness, and of the meanness of our Performances; the better Men are, the more Cause they find to humble themselves in the presence of the Lord, and to disclaim any worth in themselves; for the more they improve in Duty, the more they see into their own Vileness, and the more they admire all the divine greatness, the more they consider how mean and poor they are without Christ, and the more they wonder at the immensity of his Majesty and Goodness; so that if we do well, we shall soon detest all Pride and Self-conceit, and with the heartiest Devotion set forth the Glory of God; as the Psalmist doth: *When I consider the Heavens, the Work of thy Fingers, the Moon, and the Stars, which thou hast ordained; what is Man, that thou art mindful of him, and the Son of Man, that thou visitest him?* Psalm. 8. 3, 4.

ARTICLE XV.

JOHN I. 36.

And looking upon Jesus, as he walked, he saith, behold the Lamb of God.

THO' it is the unhappy Condition of all the Race of *Adam* to be weak and sinful, liable to mistake, and apt to transgress; yet when the Son of God became Man, and dwelt amongst us, he behaved himself with that Accuracy and Decency, that no Mistakes could be observ'd, or Sin found in him, being that Lamb of God without Spot or Blemish, typify'd in *Moses's* Law, and appointed to take away the Sins of the World; which *John Baptist* declares. **And looking upon Jesus, as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God.**

Which may direct us to the Fifteenth Article of our Church, which saith; "Christ in the Truth of our Nature, was made like unto us in all Things, Sin only excepted; from which he was clearly void, both in his Life and Spirit; he came to be the Lamb without Spot, who by the Sacrifice of himself once made, should take away the Sins of the World, and Sin (as *St. John* saith) was not in him: But all we, the rest, although Baptized and Born again in Christ, yet offend in many Things; and if we say we have no Sin, we deceive our selves, and the Truth is not in us". Consider,

- I. That Christ was Man in the Truth of our Nature; was made like unto us in all Things, Sin only excepted; from which he was clearly void, both in his Life and Spirit.
- II. He was to be the Sacrifice for Sin; he came to be the Lamb without Spot, who by the Sacrifice of himself once made, should take away the Sins of the World.
- III. He might well be such a Sacrifice, when Sin, (as *St. John* saith) was not in him.
- IV. That all others are Sinners; all we, the rest, though Baptized, and Born again in Christ, yet offend in many Things.
- V. Whoever pretend the contrary, deceive themselves; and if we say we have no Sin, we deceive our selves, and the Truth is not in us. An Explanation of these particulars will present you with the sense of the Article.

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I. Christ was really Man, not in Appearance only, but in the Truth of our Nature, in the reality of Flesh and Blood, was made like unto us in all Things, Sin only excepted; from which he was clearly and plainly Void, both in his Spirit, Mind, and Conscience, and in his Life and Conversation, Behaviour and Actions. He had Flesh and Blood about him, as we have, and was subject to all the innocent Infirmities of Human Nature; he Eat and Drank, was Weary, and took Repose, was Sorrowful and Troubled, had his Afflictions and Griefs, which pressed him down and sat heavy upon him; but in all Respects he was free from Sin; he neither consented to it in his Spirit, nor discovered it in his Life; but was Exemplary in all Goodness, was Innocent to Perfection, and was the only Pattern of Righteousness for all Mankind to imitate and follow; his Words were well weighed, and agreeable to the Case before him; his Actions were govern'd with the most consummate Wisdom; and by all that he said or did, it appear'd that he was the same, he profess'd himself to be, the Son of the Living God. *Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his Mouth.*

1 Pet. 2. 22.

II. He came into the World to be the Sacrifice for Sin, being a Lamb without Spot, and by the Sacrifice of himself atton'd for the Sins of Men, and by one Offering took away the Sins of the World.

1. He was a Lamb without Spot, the choicest and most accomplish'd Person that ever appear'd upon Earth; and therefore the fittest and properest to be separated from the rest of Men, to propitiate and atone for Mankind: He is called a Lamb, from the custom of the Jews, who were enjoin'd to cull and chuse out of their Flocks, a Lamb without Spot or Blemish, to be a Sacrifice for the Passover, which was slain in remembrance of their deliverance from Egyptian Bondage; and to typify his own Blood, which he was to shed (being the true Paschal Lamb) to secure us from the Wrath of the most High: And as he was appointed to be the Lamb of God, he exactly answer'd the Representation, being without Spot or Sin, that he might be the only acceptable Sacrifice, which could be offered unto the Father, to take away the Sins of the World. Upon this Consideration he is called frequently in Scripture, the Lamb of God; and John Baptist applies the taking of Sin away, to him, as he was the Lamb of God. *The next Day, John seeth Jesus coming to him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the Sins of the World.*

John 1. 29.

2. He came to be a Sacrifice, and to atone for the Sins of Men; or (as he expresses it) to lay down his Life for his Sheep, to make a sufficient Oblation and Satisfaction for the Sins of the World, for the Dishonour that had been put upon God and his Government, the Violation of his Laws, and the Affronts that had been past upon his Authority and Power: For Men had incurr'd that Penalty of Death, which was threaten'd in the Law; and there could be no Remission granted without shedding of Blood, no Deliverance from Death, but by the Blood of a Sacrifice sufficient to obtain Deliverance from

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1 Cor. 5. latter part 7.

Death. For this Reason, when the Fulness of Time was come, the Son of God assum'd that Body that was prepar'd for him, he came that Lamb of God, which was to be slain for the Sins of Men: Which St. Paul acknowledges, when he calls him the Passover, the usual Name that was given to the Lamb which was Slain at that Time. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

3. By the Sacrifice of himself once made, he took away the Sins of the World, obtain'd our Pardon and Deliverance, and secur'd Eternal Redemption for us: His Excellency was so Great, his Innocency so Perfect, and his Worth so Transcendent, that by one Offering he expiated and atton'd for all Men: His Death was sufficient, and what was sufficient, need not be repeated by himself or others: But it seems (as it is objected) that That was a bloody Sacrifice that was but once made; but there is a bloodless Sacrifice, that is to be made often, to the End of the World; I answer, if by way of Representation and Commemoration at the Sacrament, it may be granted; for the Bread and Wine do represent the Body and Blood of Christ, and the Church does offer up these to God, and thankfully Commemorate his Dying Love: But if in reality Christ's Body is there, and remains bloodless in the Sacrifice; I cannot apprehend it: for how can all Christ be there present without Blood? Can he have Flesh and Bones about him, and no Blood in his Veins? Or can the Cup have all Christ in Blood, and the Sacrifice be without it? But admit it to be a bloodless Sacrifice; how then does it turn to the Remission of Sins? For there can be no Remission of Sins without shedding of Blood: Or if the Blood of the first Sacrifice sufficeth, what need can there be of Sacrificing him again and again? Or how can that be a proper Sacrifice, which is perform'd without shedding of Blood, and has no Remission of Sins annex'd to it? We have more Cause to believe the Scripture, which saith, *He needeth not daily, as High-Priests, to offer up Sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the Peoples; for this he did once, when he offer'd up himself. By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.* And what is perfect, needeth not to be repeated.

Heb. 7. 27.
Chap. 9. 25.
Chap. 10. 14.

III. He might well be such a compleat Sacrifice, when (as St. John says) Sin was not in him: For there could then be no Exception taken against the Offering; it was the very same which the Divine Justice required; it had no Blemish, no Stain, and no Deformity; but was in every respect Worthy and Perfect; the Blood of which was truly valuable, and in it self Meritorious; such as could expiate (according to the Divine Agreement) for the Sins of the World, and purchase Deliverance and Acceptance: All this must be allowed, in that, he was without Sin. Other High-Priests were Sinners, and were forced to Sacrifice for their own Sins, before they could pretend to atton for the People's; but our Lord was innocent to Perfection, and he dyed not for any thing which he had done, but that he might offer up a Sacrifice truly acceptable to the Father.

And

And ye know that he being manifested to take away our sins, could in
himself have borne the sin; and though God in Mercy

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1 John 3. 5.

IV. All the rest of Men are Sinners; all we the rest, though Baptized, and Born again in Christ, yet offend in many things: Those that are Baptiz'd are Born again; and yet all we, the rest, offend in many things.

i. Those that are Baptiz'd, and thereby receiv'd into the Covenant of Grace, and God's Family, are Born again, and grafted into Christ's Church; for being by Nature Born in Sin, and the Children of Wrath, we are hereby made the Children of Grace; we are receiv'd into Favour upon the account of this Sacrifice, and allowed to share in the Benefits, that were thereby purchased in the Behalf of Sinners, and are entitl'd to Pardon of Sin, and Eternal Life; and from the Time of our Baptism, we are, in the Esteem of God, look'd upon as Members of Christ, his Children, and as Heirs set apart for Eternal Life: And if we die immediately after it, there is no doubt to be made of our Happiness: But if we live, we are upon our Tryal and good Behaviour, and hold all our Interest in the Covenant of Grace, upon this Condition, that we live up sincerely to it in some measure, and so fulfil the Laws of Christ. This is that Regeneration which the Primitive Christians maintain'd, the Scriptures testify, and our Church professes to this Day.

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

John 3. 5.

2. All Men offend; even we that are baptiz'd and born again: What by the Weakness of our Understandings, the Perverseness of our Wills, the Byass and Inclinations of our Affections; what by the Propensity of the Flesh, the Allurements of the World, and the Temptations of the Devil, Men are prone to sin, and too often transgress and offend. And it is of God's infinite Mercy, that we are not consumed. And 'tis not only the Unhappiness of this present Age, that Men are so frail and overtaken with Faults; but it has been the deplorable State of Mankind ever since the Fall, and will be to the End of the World: Nay, though we are baptiz'd and born again, we are not freed from the Danger of Offending; for our Baptism does not secure us from consenting to sin, though it puts us into a State of Pardon. We enter then indeed into God's Service, and promise Christian Obedience: He receives us into his Service, and gives us Grace and Strength to be dutiful. We solemnly vow to do what we can, through his Grace; and he promises to accept of our hearty Endeavours for his Son's Sake. All this does not exempt us from sinning, or prevent or hinder us from being assaulted and tempted, or secure us from yielding and offending! It guards and strengthens us indeed, that we may not sin; encourages and enables us to remain faithful; and would we watch and pray, we may retain our Integrity. But whilst we are under this Discipline, we carry those Infirmities about us, are so apt to mistake and chafe amiss, that Mercy must pardon our Offences, or we cannot be saved. Under the Gospel our Duty is made more easy; our Lord's Yoke is easy,

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Jam. 3. 2.

his Burthen light, and his Laws are not grievous: Nevertheless we cannot live without Sin; and though God in Mercy passes by our Transgressions, they are Transgressions still; and if any are holy and acceptable, it is because of Grace and Mercy forgive, and make them so. Those that are Saints in Heaven, had their Faults upon Earth, and committed many Things which the Divine Compassion passed by. *For in many Things we offend all; if any man offend not in Word, the same is a perfect Man, and able also to bridle the whole Body.*

1 Joh. 1. 8.

V. Whoever pretend to the contrary, deceive themselves; and if we say we have no Sin, we deceive our selves, and the Truth is not in us. St. John the beloved Disciple, who lean'd upon our Saviour's Breast, as good a Disciple, as he was beloved of our Lord, who might as well as the best pretend to be freed from Sin; this St. John declares, That if we say we have no Sin, we deceive our selves. He includes himself in the Number, and does not offer to excuse himself from it, but frankly owns, If we say, if I or any other say it, we deceive our selves. And I am persuaded, were the Assembly of Saints above allowed to publish the Infirmities of their earthly State, that they would acknowledge one by one, every one for himself, that whilst they were in this trying State, they had their Failings, and made their Mistakes, like other Men. Nay, the Blessed Virgin her self (though Blessed amongst Women) would confess too, that she was born in Sin, responsible for her Share in Adam's Guilt, as well as for the Errors of her Life. And none upon Earth, but presuming, arrogant, and conceited Men, would pretend to live without it; nay, the challenge of such a Freedom would be a sufficient Manifestation of their Guilt; for our Hearts are naturally so vain, our Inclinations so froward, that we may safely say that our own Hearts deceive us, when we boast of being freed from Sin. *If we say that we have no Sin, we deceive our selves, and the Truth is not in us.*

By this Declaration of our Church, we must acknowledge it safest and most ingenuous, to confess our Sins to God; to set the steadier Guard over our Hearts and Lives; and to depend upon the Sacrifice of Christ for Pardon and Peace.

1. It is safest and most ingenuous to lay aside all Self-conceit and Pride of Heart, and to own in all Humility that we are Sinners, and in many Things have offended. For if we consult our own Hearts, and search into the Privacies of our Lives; we must take this Shame to our selves, and ingenuously own that we are Sinners, Which of us can say, That we have fulfilled the Laws of Christ? Whose Conscience can bear him Witness, that he never did transgress the Laws of God? Or who can say, that his Thoughts never went astray; his Tongue never mistook, or that his Actions never swerved from Righteousness? This is such a Perfection, as no Man can in Modesty pretend unto; such a Purity, which cannot be found on Earth. For as we are all the Children of Adam, we are the Children of Wrath; And though we are Christians, we are still in the

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Flesh, still are weak, still are imprudent and vain, and must not boast of any Perfection. For St. *John* owns, he had his Sins, and the other Apostles had theirs; and the best of Men were perhaps weaker and vainer than they. And therefore it is our Duty to own uprightly what we are, and to humble our selves before God, that he may lift us up. For if we confess our Sins, there is some Hope, that we may forsake them, and become new Men: But if we will not confess them, there can be but little Hope that ever we will amend. If once we excuse our selves, because others are Sinners as well as we, we may die in our Sins: For the Faults of others will not excuse our own, nor will their Crimes lessen ours. We must confess and amend, or we shall perish with the rest of the World. *If we confess our Sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanse us from all Unrighteousness.* 1 Joh. 1. 9.

2. We must think it reasonable to set the steadier Guard over our Hearts and Lives; that, since we know how weak and vain we are, we may take the greater Heed to our Ways, and behave our selves with the greater Caution. What can be more reasonable, than for the Man that knows his own Infirmities, to be the more careful in his Conversation? I am sure we can do so in reference to our Health; if we know we are liable to catch a Distemper, we are the more wary to shun it: I know no Reason why we should not be as careful of our Behaviour; that since we know how apt we are to fall, we may take the more Heed how we walk. Thus all of us may correct our Mistakes, prevent our being gross Offenders, and acquit our selves with the greater Circumspection. Those that are apt to drink too much, may thus watch and be sober; or those that are prone to be lascivious, may thus take heed and be chaste; and such whose Hearts are set upon the World, may thus consider, and withdraw them from it. Our Saviour thought this the best Expedient to be us'd in such Cases, when he calls upon us to Watch and Pray. And St. *Paul* gives us this Caution, that we may take heed lest we fall; and common Discretion may teach us the same Wisdom. For what Man that knows his own Weakness, would not for his own Safety and Reputation, strive against it? *And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch.* Mar. 13. 37.

3. Depend upon the Sacrifice of Christ for Pardon and Peace. For as he was without Sin, he was able to satisfy the Father in our Behalf: And as he died and rose again, we are sure he has obtained Eternal Redemption for us. We must therefore do our best to please God in him; and when we have done all we can, we must trust to his Blood and Mediation for our Pardon and Salvation. Trust not to others in this important Case; no nor to your selves, or any thing ye can do, but to him, who, *In the end of the World hath appeared to put away Sin, by the Sacrifice of himself.* Heb. 9. 26.

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ARTICLE XVI.

I J O H. II. The latter Part of the 1st Verse.

If any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous.

WHEN we were Baptiz'd, we vowed all possible Obedience to God in Jesus Christ, and were set apart for Righteousness and Holiness of Life; but our Weaknesses remaining upon us, and betraying us, by mistake or surprize into Sin, yet may we not give our selves over for Lost upon every Relapse: For though we must strive to live up to our Vows, and use all imaginable caution that we sin not; yet **If any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous.** Or if any Christian sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, who is the Propitiation for our Sins, that is, for the Sins of Christians, who may hope, by his Mediation, to find Mercy, though we unhappily sin after our Baptism; which leads me to the Sixteenth Article of our Church, which says,

“ Not every deadly Sin willingly committed after Baptism, is the Sin
“ against the Holy Ghost, and unpardonable. Wherefore the Grant
“ of Repentance is not to be denied to such as fall into Sin after
“ Baptism. After we have received the Holy Ghost, we may de-
“ part from Grace given, and fall into Sin; and by the Grace of
“ God we may rise again and amend our Lives: And therefore they
“ are to be condemned which say, they can no more Sin, as long
“ as they live here; or deny the Place of Forgiveness to such as
“ truly Repent.

I. Not every deadly Sin committed after Baptism, is the Sin against the Holy Ghost, and unpardonable.

II. Men are not to be discouraged, if they sin after Baptism: The Grant of Repentance is not to be deny'd to such as fall into Sin after Baptism.

III. Men may sin, after they have received the Holy Ghost: We may depart from Grace given, and fall into Sin.

IV. When this is done, by the Grace of God, we may rise again, and amend our Lives.

V. And therefore they are to be condemned, which say, they can no more Sin as long as they live here, or who deny the Place of Forgiveness to such as truly repent.

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I. The Pardonableness of deadly Sin after Baptism is here asserted; not every deadly Sin committed after Baptism is the Sin against the Holy Ghost, and unpardonable. Consider what deadly Sin is; what the Sin against the Holy Ghost was; and that there is no other Sin but what is pardonable.

1. By deadly Sin, we understand such a Sin as is wilfully committed, against Knowledge and Conscience, which cannot be extenuated by Ignorance or Infirmary, or lessen'd by Surprise or Circumstances which in other Sins may plead for Allowance: It is a wilful Presumption against the Laws of Christ, a deliberate Transgression of the Divine Will. For every Sin of that Nature is threaten'd with Eternal Death. Some distinguish between venial and deadly Sins; and number up Seven, which go by that Name; but whatever Allowances God may make for Sins of Ignorance and Infirmary, we are sensible, that every wilful Presumptuous Sin is deadly in the Sight of God, a great Transgression, and calls for a particular Repentance. *Keep back thy Servant also from presumptuous Sins, let them not have dominion over me; then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great Transgression.* Psal. 19. 13.

2. The Sin against the Holy Ghost, which particularly goes by that Name, and is distinguish'd from all other, was the Blaspheming the Miracles of Jesus, and ascribing those Works to the Assistance and Power of the Devil, which our Saviour perform'd by the Spirit of God. This being allowed, there may be many deadly Sins committed, which are not the Sin against the Holy Ghost; for Men may commit them, and not blaspheme the Power, by which the Miracles were done: Nay, that very Sin peradventure cannot be formally committed in our Days; because we are not allowed to behold our Saviour working miraculously, nor can we pass an immediate Judgment upon him, as the Jews did; because we are not admitted to see any of them done. *But when the Pharisees heard (that the Man, possess'd with a Devil blind and dumb, was healed) they said, This Fellow doth not cast out Devils, but by Beelzebub the Prince of the Devils:—Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of Sin and Blasphemy shall be forgiven unto Men, but the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.* Matt. 12. 24, 31.

3. We know of no other Sin that can be committed by Men, but what is pardonable, though presumptuous and wilful, though deadly and exceeding dangerous; because this is the only Sin that is excepted, to which no Pardon is annex'd, and for which no Mercy is granted; and if it cannot be committed in this Age, the scrupulous and timorous should not disturb themselves about it. But any other deadly Sin whatsoever, whether committed before Baptism or after, by the great Mercy of God in Jesus Christ is pardonable, and upon hearty Repentance and Reformation shall be forgiven. *Verily, I say unto you, all Sins shall be forgiven to the Sons of Men, and Blasphemies, wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never Forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal Damnation.* Mark 3. 28, 29.

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II. Men are not to be discouraged if they sin after Baptism, but to be used with all Compassion and Tenderness. Wherefore the Grant of Repentance is not to be deny'd to such as fall into Sin after Baptism. The whole Society of Christians, from the Days of our Saviour to this Time, have had too many sad Instances of falling into Sin after Baptism; and if Repentance should be deny'd to them, who could be sav'd? for in many Things we offend all. Or if the Door should be shut against Penitents, when Conscience accuses, and they are under the Horror of their Guilt, and plead for Mercy, how miserably would they be driven to Despair? Our Saviour therefore, consulting the Weakness and Necessities of his Servants, hath declared so much Love to the Souls of Men, that if the most prodigal Child will return, he will entertain and embrace him: If Adulterers and Adulteresses will reform, he will admit them upon their Repentance. He invites the weary and heavy laden to him, look'd kindly upon *Peter*, and as it were invited him to Repentance, when he had denied him; and applies particular Means for the Recovery of his Servants, and stands ready with open Arms to receive them. When our Lord is thus gracious to returning Sinners; who is he, that dares oppose their Reconciliation to the Church's Peace? If he admits of their Repentance, and is pleas'd with it, what Boldness is it in any that are Servants, and no better than restor'd Penitents, to refuse it? Shall not Fellow-Sinners be as indulgent to one another, as their Lord? Ought not they to allow of, and encourage the Repentance which he admits? Since he is so kind, I would, if it lay in my Power, invite the whole World to return and call for Mercy; I would invite and intreat the worst of Men to consider the Errors of their Ways, to amend their Lives, and to become new Men, that they might be saved. And because I can reach no farther with my Voice than this Place, I most heartily invite you all to Repentance; I most solemnly beseech you to repent and turn, that ye may live. What though ye have been overtaken with a Fault since your Baptism? What though ye have been very presumptuous and very negligent? Nay, what though the Sins of some have been most horrid and deadly, of the ugliest and blackest Nature, yet do not despond, or give your selves over for lost? Do not grow desperate, and lay Repentance aside; for the Door of Mercy is open still for you, the Grant of Repentance is still before you, and both Reconciliation and Forgiveness may be still obtain'd. If your Hearts smite you, if your Consciences accuse you, if ye are heartily concern'd, and are truly sorrowful, if ye humble your selves before God, and endeavour seriously and uprightly to live up to the Gospel; your Pardon may be obtain'd, your Peace may be secur'd, and ye, that have provoked the most High so much, and expos'd your selves so often to his Displeasure, may be accepted and saved. Do but embrace this present Opportunity, and comply with this Proposal; "though your Sins are as Scarlet, ye shall be as white as Snow, though like Crimson, they shall be as Wooll". I may here with safety apply our Saviour's Words, which he spake to the Woman taken in Adul-

Adultery. *Hath no Man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord: And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more.* Article XVI.

Joh. 8. 10, 11.

III. There is danger of our Falling after we have received the Holy Ghost: We may depart from Grace given, and fall into Sin. We receiv'd at our Baptism a Measure of the Holy Ghost, for our Assistance and Encouragement; for we were then regenerated and born of Water and the Holy Ghost, and strengthen'd from above for the Service we enter'd upon, with that ordinary Concurrence and Assistance of the Holy Spirit, by which we might work out our Salvation, and please God in Christ. We are since left at Liberty to employ this Measure of Grace for our Good, or to neglect and despise it. For this Holy Assistant does not usually storm and take our Hearts by an irresistible Force; but like an indulgent Friend offers his Help, removes what may hinder us in our Duty, and affords what is proper and necessary to guide and prosper us in it, that we may be good and acceptable if we please; or may not, if we refuse. Hence it is possible to depart from Grace given; nay, hence it is that so many fall into Sin, and forfeit the Love of God. We also may if we will, attend, take heed, and comply, and secure our Souls; and if we are slack and negligent in our Christian Warfare, may turn from the excellent Commandment, neglect this gracious Assistance, yield to Temptations, and may be over-taken with a Fault: For the Holy Ghost does not force us to be dutiful, or constrain and necessitate us to be faithful. He does ordinarily prevent, assist, and follow us with good Advice, pious Motions, and holy Inclinations, and then usually leaves it to us to determine, chuse, and to act for our own Safety. And for this Reason it is undoubted, and sad Experience does confirm, what our Church asserts, that we may depart from Grace given, and fall into Sin. We have too many Instances of those that have apostatiz'd from the Christian Faith, and of those that have begun well, and lost their Integrity. This is so clear, plain, and certain, that the following Article of Predestination is to be explained by this. For how is it possible that our Church should intend by Predestination an absolute, irrespective Decree of saving such a determinate Number of Souls, and of damning the rest? If we may depart from Grace given, fall away, and lose the Favour of God; that Predestination that is made consistent with this Liberty, must be conditional, and respect the Actions of free Agents. And therefore either this and the following Article must contradict one another, and our Reformers that compos'd them, were not consistent with themselves; or else that Predestination they assert, must be made consistent with departing from Grace given. I cannot therefore but think it happy, that this Article which asserts a Departure from Grace possible, is plac'd immediately before that of Predestination, and affords a proper Light to clear up the Scruples that may arise from it. For if we may fall, we are not under an absolute and unconditional Predestination. *If God spared not the natural Branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.* Rom. 11. 21.

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Tit. 2. 11, 12.

IV. When this is done, and we do fall, we may (by the Grace of God) rise again, and amend our Lives; we may recover our Feet from the Snare, and may be reinstated in the Divine Favour. This is not to be done by any natural Strength of our own; for of our selves we can neither think a good Thought, nor perform a good Action. But as weak as we are, we may, through Grace, take hold of the Hand that is stretched forth to keep us from sinking, as St. Peter did. We may hearken and consent to the Means for our Recovery, and though unable to use them, may concur with him, who affords his Help and Assistance to us; and as he calls upon us to be renewed, we may comply with that Call, and may be obedient to that Grace that rescues and saves us. This Grace that is thus assisting, by which we may rise again when we have fallen, and amend our Lives; this very Grace is not granted and confin'd to a few particular Persons, to a certain determinate Number of Elected Persons, and no other. For this Grace of God is communicated to all Christians, and teaches all Men to rise again, and amend their Lives; it teaches you, me, and all others to do the same. And the Scripture concurs with our Church, when it says, *For the Grace of God, that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all Men, teaching us, that denying Ungodliness, and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World.*

V. They are therefore under an Error, and are to be condemned, which say, they can no more sin, as long as they live here; or deny the Place of (Repentance or) Forgiveness to such as truly repent.

1. It is a great Error, and is to be condemned, when Men say, They can no more sin as long as they live here, or presume that they are in a State of Perfection, and plac'd beyond all Danger of Mis-carrying. Whether they fancy this upon the Account of an absolute Election, in which they pretend to be included, or upon the Perfection of a Light within, which leads them out of all Sin: Let the Pretence arise from these, or such like Presumptions, 'tis an Error, and is to be spoken against, and condemn'd; for in this perilous State, where Temptations are so frequent and so strong, Men may be overtaken with a Fault. The very best are not absolutely free from Danger, till their Race is run, their Course finished, and their Accounts given up. The Church is here militant, and the several Members of it are surrounded with Temptations and Trials. We our selves live in the midst of Snares and Dangers, who are commanded to watch and pray, and must be diligent and careful, that we may not presume or offend. And let others boast as they please, we know that this is no sinless State: Here we have no Freedom from Discipline or Duty; but as we intend to be found worthy, must submit, take up our Cross, deny our selves, and take heed lest we fall: And 'tis no other than Presumption in any, to look upon themselves as excus'd from Danger of Falling, either upon the Account of God's Decree of Election, or the Light's Perfection. *Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.*

1 Cor. 10. 12.

2. As much are those to be condemned, who deny the Place of Forgiveness to such as truly repent; which was the Error of the *Novatians*, and may be charged upon an unhappy Explanation of Decrees. For if Men, after the Commission of Sin, do really and truly repent, the Promise of Forgiveness is made over to them; and 'tis not in the Power of others to deprive them of the Benefit of that Promise, which God hath made for their Relief and Encouragement. What has Man to do to reverse that which God hath established; or to deny a Sinner that Mercy which God hath granted? Let Offenders see that their Repentance is genuine and true, free from Hypocrisy and Dissimulation; and they may trust to the Divine Compassion for Pardon: For 'tis not in the Power of Men to cancel that Favour, which God has granted in the Blood of Jesus. *Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, to day if ye will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts.* Article XVI. Heb. 3. 7, 8.

From hence I must caution you, that ye neither Presume, nor Despair; but sincerely strive to please God in Christ.

1st, Do not presume upon the Divine Goodness, and sin the more because ye understand ye may rise again. For presumptuous Sins are of a destructive Nature; they grieve the Holy Spirit, which should lift you up; and frustrate those Assistances, which should relieve you: Nay, when repeated, and continued in, they habituate the Soul to Vice, harden the very Heart, and render all the Means ineffectual, which were design'd for your Recovery. And therefore be not bold in the Commission of Sin, never presume to break wilfully the Laws of God, nor suffer your selves to be led into Transgressions in Hope of a Return. For though 'tis possible ye may rise again, 'tis as possible ye never may; and 'tis meer Folly to run such a Hazard, which might have been prevented. For where one rises again, many continue in Sin and perish. *What shall we say then? Shall we sin, that Grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?* Rom. 6. 1, 2.

2. I must desire the vicious not to despair, or give themselves over for lost; for though ye have sinned much for a long Time, against Grace and Mercy, yet ye may rise again: We know nothing to the contrary; the Word is still preached unto you; the Grace of God still helps and moves; and would ye turn at last, ye may be forgiven. Say not desperately, I shall be damned, and I may do this Wickedness; for upon Repentance ye may be sav'd. *For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord; wherefore turn your selves and live ye.* Ezek. 18. 32.

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ARTICLE XVII.

EPHES. I. 4.

According as he hath chosen us in him, before the Foundation of the World, that we should be Holy, and without Blame before him in Love.

NOT to take notice of the Superlapsarian or Sublapsarian Doctrine, which in the last Age was so controverted and bandied about by the Zealous, it was certainly the infinite Mercy of God to the Souls of Men, which has provided Relief for us Sinners, and offered us Peace and Salvation in his Son Jesus. 'Tis not for us to pry into the Secrets of his Counsel, or to dictate to him how he contriv'd, effected, and finishes this Work: 'Tis enough for us to know, that he hath condescended so far as to offer us the Terms of Salvation, and that it is our Fault, if we do not find the Benefit of so much Kindness. **According as he hath chosen us in him, before the Foundation of the World, that we should be Holy, and without Blame before him in Love.** Which leads me to the Seventeenth Article; in which let us consider,

I. What Predestination to Life is. "The Everlasting Purpose of God, whereby, before the Foundations of the World were laid, he hath constantly decreed by his Counsel, secret to us, to deliver from Curse and Damnation, those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of Mankind, and to bring them by Christ to Everlasting Salvation, as Vessels made to Honour".

II. According to this Choice made in Christ, "(Wherefore) they which be endued with so excellent a Benefit of God, be called according to God's Purpose, by his Spirit working in due Season; they through Grace obey the Calling, they be justified freely, they be made Sons of God by Adoption, they be made like the Image of his only Begotten Son Jesus Christ, they walk religiously in good Works, and at length by God's Mercy they attain to Everlasting Felicity".

III. The Consideration of this inspirits the Godly to persist in well-doing. "As the godly Consideration of our Predestination and Election in Christ is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable Comfort to godly Persons, and such as feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the

" the Works of the Flesh, and their earthly Members, and
" drawing up their Minds to high and heavenly Things; as
" well because it doth greatly establish and confirm their Faith
" of eternal Salvation, to be enjoyed through Christ, as be-
" cause it doth fervently kindle their Love towards God "

IV. It is dangerous for curious Persons to depend upon this. " So
" for curious and carnal Persons, lacking the Spirit of Christ,
" to have continually before their Eyes the Sentence of God's
" Predestination, is a most dangerous Downfall, whereby the
" Devil doth thrust them either into Desperation, or into
" Wretchedness of unclean Living, no less perilous than Despe-
" ration.

V. We must receive God's Promises as mention'd in his Word.
" Furthermore we must receive God's Promises in such wise as
" they be generally set forth unto us in Holy Scripture. And
" in our Doings, that Will of God is to be followed, which
" we have expressly declared unto us in the Word of God "

I. Predestination to Life is the everlasting Purpose of God; and
may be consider'd as Absolute, or Conditional. As Absolute,
consider,

1. It must be granted, that God may have his particular Favou-
rites, whom he hath decreed to deliver from Curse and Damnation
in, by, and through his Son Jesus. That as we see how Princes de-
light to single out some particular Persons, upon whom they heap
their Favours to excess; so I see no Cause why the King of Kings
may not fix his Eye and Heart upon some from all Eternity, which
in Time he resolves to make the Standards of Religion, and to secure
from being deceiv'd or ruin'd, that they may be Vessels of Honour
for ever: For he is doubtless at Liberty to do what he will with his
own, and to dispose of his Kindness as he pleases, and may reserve
his peculiar and special Love, for some whom he ordains to be the
First-fruits of his Son's Passion, and the Heirs of the Promise, that
his Son may not be incarnate, and preach, and dye in vain. Our
Saviour when on Earth, separates *John, James, and Peter*, to be his
intimate Companions; and to shew how his Friendship determin'd in
Favour of one more than another, he singles out *John* from these,
allows him to be familiar with him, to lean upon his Breast, to ask
him Questions, and to bear the Character of the Beloved Disciple.
And as he was thus particular in his Affection upon Earth, his Father
(for ought I know) for some special Reasons, best known to him-
self, may select some Favourites to stand up in his Name, to avouch
the Truth of his Son's Message, and to defend the Christian Religi-
on in all Ages. That as *Noah, Abraham, Job, and Daniel* were cho-
sen and called by him, he may elect others; as his Son chose the
Twelve Apostles to be his particular Favourites. This may be done
without any Prejudice to the rest of Mankind; who may neverthe-
less partake of those common Favours, which his Son hath purchas'd
for Sinners. *Having predestinated us unto the Adoption of Children*
by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good Pleasure of his Will

Eph. 1. 5.

2. This

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Joh. 3. 17.

2. This Predestination unto Life may be Conditional, as it respects the Society and Body of Christians. For by his Counsel, secret to us, he hath passed by the fallen Angels, and hath chosen us Christians to the use of Means, and promises to deliver us from Curse and Damnation, upon Condition that we repent of Sin, believe in his Son, and obey the Gospel: And upon our Faithfulness, will treat us as Vessels made to Honour. This may be easily reconciled to the Words of the Article; for he purposes to deliver those, that are chosen in Christ; that is, according to the Gospel which Christ hath preached; or according to the Conditions that are propos'd to us in Christ: And hath resolv'd to bring them by Christ and his Gospel to Salvation, or is fully purpos'd to save all those, that are penitent Believers in, and Faithful to his Son. And in this Sense he hath chosen all those Christians that conform themselves to the Laws of Christ, as well one as another; and is willing that every one should work out their Salvation, that they may be made Vessels of Honour. And thus it is put into our Power to shew our selves the Elected and Chosen of the Lord: For if we truly repent of our Sins, and reform our Lives, we become qualified, according to the Decree of Election, and shall be happy. After this way of Explanation, we justify the Ways of God to the Children of Men, and his Absolute and Conditional Decrees become consistent. The Favour of a Prince to some intimate Subjects does not injure the rest; and the Decree of the Almighty to signalize some particular Persons, does not prejudice any other; or engage him to be the less solicitous for the Welfare of all; it rather displays his Kindness to all Mankind, when he absolutely chuses some to be Guides and Examples to the rest, and rather confirms his general Promise, by which he invites all Mankind to Repentance. For doubtless, let his particular Kindnesses to some be what they will, he must design the Welfare of all, who raises up his particular Favourites to call upon the rest, and to invite them to Repentance, and to partake of his Mercy. *For God sent not his Son into the World, to condemn the World, but that the World through him might be saved.*

II. According to this Choice made in Christ, Men are called, the Conditions are propos'd according to God's Purpose in Christ, by his Word, and by the Assistances of his Spirit: And in due Season, such as conform to the Conditions, and obey the Calling, are reputed the Sons of God, bear his Image in Christ, are justify'd by Faith in his Blood, walk as religious Men, abound in good Works, and in the End obtain Eternal Life. Or in other Terms, they willingly accept of the Conditions of Mercy in Christ Jesus, and live according to the Gospel: That as they are chosen to the Means, improve under them, are renewed and changed by them; so they get ready to be chosen to Happiness, to be found Faithful in the Great Day, to be declar'd worthy, to be cleared, when they are judged, to be accepted in the Beloved Jesus, and to obtain Everlasting Happiness by him. So that these are but the Consequents of the Conditional Decree, the Effects it leads unto, when Men accept of the Means, and

and improve under them. For at the same Time that God decrees to call us to the Knowledge of his Son, and to allow us the Use of the Means of Grace, he must decree to help us by his Grace, to pardon us in his Son, and to save us according to his own Promise. So that it is one and the same Condition of Decree, which calls, which pardons, which justifies, and brings to Heaven. And as many as are called, they may comply and enjoy the Benefits and Fruits of their Calling. But a few only are chosen, because but a few obey this Call, fulfil that Righteousness which was commanded, and live up to the Conditions propos'd; which had they done, they might as well have been chosen as called, and might have been as certainly saved, as they were invited to Salvation: For the Conditional Decree included them as well as the rest; and God design'd in Sincerity to be as gracious to them as to the rest; and it is owing to their Neglect or Presumption, that they are disappointed. Those that are absolutely predestinated indeed, they are wonderfully brought to be willing and obedient; they are called, and obey without Failure: But those that are conditionally elected may comply, if they will take heed, or may miscarry, if they will presume. *But to as many as received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his Name.* Article XVII.

Joh. 1. 12.

III. The Consideration of this inspirits the Godly to continue in Well-doing, and puts them upon greater Diligence and Care; for it brings a real Pleasure to them, and fills them with sweet, pleasant, and sometimes unspeakable Comfort, to consider the great Love of God in Christ Jesus, to think how he hath given the Promise of Pardon and Peace in him, and how he hath resolv'd and decreed to save all those that sincerely repent, believe, and obey: This must needs transport them with Joy, when they know they have repented and believed, and feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, when they in Earnest by the help of it mortify their Lusts, and subduing their Minds, Wills, and Affections to the Laws of Jesus, are faithful to him. This Thought will inflame them with the Love of God, will strengthen and establish their Faith, cause them to be the more resolute and earnest in Duty, and oblige them to take the greater Heed, and to become the more faithful. For if we make it our Case, (as well we may, for the Promise is made to us and our Children) it is apparent, that God has decreed, that we should have the Use of the Means of Grace, and the Hope of Glory before us. If therefore we find that we have repented, believed, and obeyed; what Pleasure may we take in our Religion? What Comfort in our Duty? Yea, what Joy and Peace in the Consideration of God's Promise, and the Prospect of his Glory? For as we know we are sincere and upright before him, and feel his Grace in our Hearts, we may please our selves with the Expectation of Eternal Life and Happiness, and may assure our selves that if we remain Faithful, we shall be hap-

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XVII.Rev. 2. 17,
the latter Part.

happy. This is a Pleasure far beyond any Enjoyment that can be found upon Earth, and hath those Transports attending it, which the World knoweth not. *To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the bidden Manna, and will give him a white Stone; and in the Stone a new Name written, which no man knoweth, but he that receiveth it.*

IV. It is dangerous for curious Persons to depend upon this Decree, or to appropriate it to themselves; for it leads them to Despair or Presumption. If they let their Fancy out-run their Religion, or their Imaginations dictate to their Minds, it may prove fatal to them. For carnal Men, who have not the Spirit, may dote so long upon Decrees, till they fancy they are reprobated, cast off, and left to shift for themselves; and growing desperate, may run into all Manner of Licentiousness: Or may pretend to be the Chosen of the Lord, his Elected and Beloved in Christ; and may fancy that God sees no Faults in them, that they may do what they will, live as they list, and that they are secur'd by the Decree: Or (as our Church expresses it) may fall into unclean Living, into Impurity and wretched Pollutions, and think they may escape. This is a very ill Use made of the Divine Purpose, which God never intended, and which none but carnal, brutish, unclean, wicked Men would admit. And yet as bad and abominable as it is, we live to hear how too many turn the Grace of God into Wantonness, and under the Umbrage of Election become the worst of Men. Such irreligious Thoughts as these, ought not to be admitted. For though God should have some particular Favourites, he allows none to revel in his Kindness, or under the Pretence of his Love, to be the more wicked. He is Holiness itself, and those whom he chuses, he sets a-part for Holiness, that they may become pure, and without rebuke before him in Love: And whoever presume upon his Goodness, and commit Sin with Greediness, will find, that he is a Terror to evil Doers, and a consuming Fire. 'Tis far from him to decree the Happiness of those that break his Laws, or to reward those as Favourites who do the Service of the Devil. *For thou art not a God that bath pleasure in Wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee.*

Psal. 5. 4.

V. 'Tis not for us to pry into Decrees, but to receive God's Promises, as mention'd in his Word, as set forth in the Holy Scripture, and to act, and behave our selves, as he hath commanded. In all our Doings, we should mind, follow, and obey the Will of God, as it is revealed to us: Would we do this, we should never trouble our selves about the Decrees, but mind our Duty, and labour to perform it; for the Scripture declares, that whosoever believes in Jesus, shall not perish, but have Everlasting Life; it sets forth the Love of God in general Terms, invites all to Repentance, and promises Pardon and Peace to all that return and amend. And the God of all Truth, who calls upon all,

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will impart his Mercy to all that are qualified for it. Take then his Promises, as they are, and never presume to streighten his Love, who is the common Father of us all, or to suspect his Kindness, who is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance. By his Order the Angels proclaimed, *Glory to God in the Highest, on Earth Peace, good Will towards Men.* Article XVII. Luke 2. 14

From this Account observe, That here is not one Word in the Article, of Reprobation; That if God hath his Favourites, he doth not cast the rest off; That our Church directs us to order our Doings by the Word of God.

1. Here is not one Word in this Article of Reprobation, or of a Decree which casts off the rest of Men, or leaves them to bear their own Burthen: On the contrary, we are directed to receive and understand God's Promises, as they are generally set forth in Scripture. And as it is manifest, that God offers Mercy to all in his Son's Name, that are weary and heavy Laden; and is willing that his Son should be the Saviour of all Men, especially of those that believe; we may be sure that he hath reprobated or rejected none that do not reprobate themselves. He is a kind and good Father to all; and as he gives us Food and Raiment, he is willing that his Mercy should be over all, in the saving of their Souls. *Despise thou the riches of his Goodness, and Forbearance, and Long-suffering? not knowing that the Goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance.* Rom. 2. 4

2. If God hath his Favourites, which he designs to be the Salt of the Earth, he does not cast off the rest of Men; but would they perform the Conditions of Grace, they also may be saved. Because *David* was a Man after his own Heart, he did not cast off *Israel*; because *Daniel* was highly beloved, he did not neglect his People in Captivity: Because *John* lay in his Saviour's Bosom, the rest of the Apostles were not slighted. He hath Kindness enough for all Mankind, over and above what he fixes upon Particulars. This his Favour cannot injure others, when he scatters his Friends about to do others good, and makes them invincible, to reclaim and encourage the rest. *Abraham* is an Example of true Religion in an Idolatrous Age. *Lot* preaches Righteousness to a wicked World: *Daniel* pleads for the Deliverance of the Captives. The Prophets in their Days, the Apostles under the Gospel, proclaim'd his Mercy to Men. So that if such were elected, they were serviceable to others, and Instruments in reforming the World. But if this will not satisfy, that though he hath Favourites, he hath a Love for all, I must appeal to his own Words, where he swears by himself, that he desires not the Death of a Sinner, but is willing that every one should turn and live. He hath therefore Kindness for all in general, and would rejoice in the Happiness of all. *Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the Waters.* Isa. 55. 1

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Rom. 8. 30.

3. Our Church adviseth you to order your Doings by the Word of God, and if ye live as he commands, there is Mercy in store for all: If ye do your Duty, ye need not question or doubt of his Acceptance; and when he calls us to Duty, we may be certain we may do it; and if we do it, we may be as certain we shall be rewarded: Nay, the Way to his special Favour is by Duty, and if we would be Favourites, we must be faithful. His Decrees can never hurt the obedient, nor prejudice such as are sincere and upright before him. *Whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, those he also justified; and whom he justified, them he glorified.*

ARTICLE

ARTICLE XVIII.

I JOHN II. 19.

They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us.

IT is counted a Sign of indiscreet Zeal in our Days, to condemn the Sects that abound in Religion, and very uncharitable to anathematize any that differ from us; and Moderation is grown to that Height, that it is almost criminal to oppose the Men of Latitude, and next to Antichristianism to reprove those Occasional Consciences, that can approve of Religion in any Form, or under any Disguise, and encourage those that deny our Lord, and blaspheme the Name by which we are called. But St. John found there was such designing Men got amongst Christians, and warns the Church against them: He makes no Scruple to call them Antichrists; and was so far from favouring their Principles of Separation, that he declares, that they did not belong to the Christian Flock. **They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us.** Which speaks the Sense of the Eighteenth Article of our Church, which says,

“ They also are to be had accursed, that presume to say, That every Man shall be saved by the Law, or Sect, which he professeth; so that he diligently frame his Life according to that Law, and the Light of Nature: For the Holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the Name of Jesus Christ, whereby Men must be saved ”.

So that our Church does not scruple to anathematize and curse those that pretend to be saved by any other Way or Name, than that of our Lord Jesus Christ; little dreaming that soon after, some would arise amongst us, who deny the Lord that bought them, and yet pretend mightily for Moderation, that they might screen themselves under that Pretence from the Observation and Censures of others. In order therefore to explain this Article unto you, I must premise, That our Church curses none but those who deny the Foundation of our Faith, the Lord Jesus Christ, and expect to be saved by their own Way of Religion, and the Law of Nature. For if others own the Lord Jesus, and hope for Salvation by him; however they may

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may be mistaken in some other Points, she curses them not, but leaves them to stand or fall to their own Master. Admitting this to be understood in the Sequel of this Discourse, I shall observe upon this Article,

I. That there are some who presume to say, That every Man shall be saved by the Law, or Sect, which he professeth; provided he frame his Life according to that Law, and the Light of Nature.

II. That they also are to be had accursed, that are of this Opinion, be they who they will, according to the Censures of our Church.

III. The Reason is given to warrant this Anathema; For Holy Scripture doth set out unto us, only the Name of Jesus Christ, whereby Men must be saved.

I will insist upon these Particulars in the Explanation of this Article.

I. There are some who presume to say, That every Man shall be saved by the Law, or Sect which he professeth, provided he frames his Life according to it, and the Light of Nature. There were such in those Days, against whom this Article was penn'd; and there are such risen up amongst our selves, who equally commend all Religions, and hope the best of all Sects, when they live honestly in the World, and conform to the best of their Knowledge, or behave themselves according to the Law, or Light of Nature. This is become a Maxim for Moderation, and a Principle by which some distinguish themselves in their Conversations; they are grown very tender towards all Religions, and could be easily persuaded that God also is pleas'd with the Variety of Sects, as he is with the different Sorts of Creatures. For it seems, some Opinions attend the Complexion and Composure of the Body; and there will be different Sects, as long as there are different Faces, Sentiments, and Consciences. But are these Men aware of the Consequences of this Latitude? Do they know what they say, when they assert the Salvation of Men of all Sects and Laws? It may be indeed that they only entertain'd this Opinion in Favour of Dissenting Consciences: But our Church allows those that hold the Foundation, to answer for themselves, but curses those of this Latitude, because of the dismal Consequences of it; for if Men of any Sect, and any Law, may be saved, then they may be saved without Christ; then there was no Need of his Incarnation, Doctrine, or Passion, and Intercession: Then the Followers of *Mahomet* are in as safe a Condition, as the Followers of *Jesus*: Then the Religious amongst the *Barbarians*, are as much in the Right as *Christians*: then all the Devout amongst Heathens are in as fair a way to Happiness, as those that have a Revelation for their Guide: Nay, then the Theists amongst our selves, that oppose all reveal'd Religion, despise our Saviour, ridicule his Worship, and set up the Light of Nature in Opposition

to the Holy Scriptures, are good Men and Rational, and in as hopeful a Condition as any other: Nay the very Atheist, that takes his Reason for his Guide, and pretends to live up to the Light of it, tho' he says, There is no God, indulges his Lusts, and imitates the brute Beasts, is then in a fair way of being happy.

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These are the Consequences of this Opinion, which pleads for the Salvation of all Sects and Religions in the World. And though 'tis possible, the Men of this excessive Charity and Moderation, are not so well aware of these Consequences, and may design thereby to favour some amongst us; yet it must be granted, that he that allows all Religions upon this Principle, does in effect acknowledge, that Men may shift well enough without a Saviour in another World, and that Salvation may be had by any other without him.

This our Church looks upon to be so very dangerous to the Souls Men, as not fit to be admitted in a Christian Society, or to be born with amongst us, without a particular Censure. For whilst other Opinions are taken up about Principles of lesser Moment, this strikes at the very Foundation of our Faith, pulls out the Corner Stone of the Building, and as well maintains the Safety of all *Jews, Turks, and Infidels*, as gives License to any Impostor to invent and publish new Opinions, new Laws of Religion, and to gather new Sects and Followers. For provided they live up to that Law which is publish'd, and act according to the Light of Nature so called, they may be saved. This is so contrary to Revelation, that let the Patrons of it appear never so zealous or charitable, I make no doubt, but one Text of St. Paul may confute them, if they will admit his Authority to be of any Moment with them. *For other Foundation can no Man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*

1 Cor. 3. 11.

II. They are to be accursed that are of this Opinion, be they who they will, according to the Censures of our Church. Let them pretend a great Concern for the Welfare of Men, a real Charity for Souls, a tender Regard for Conscience: Let them signalize themselves for Moderation, and pass for Men of great Latitude, and large Souls; if they maintain this Principle, our Church pronounces a Curse against them: Nay, if they shrowd themselves under her Profession, and hold Communion with her, she does not scruple to say, They also are to be accursed. For as Revelation is true, we are taught by it to expect Salvation in no other Way, than by Jesus Christ; and whoever teaches another Way, pretends to be wiser than God, and to know better than he himself, how Salvation may be obtain'd, how his Mercy is to be dispens'd, his Pardon granted, and his Favour given: These Men can inform us (if we will credit them) how Heaven, and the Glory of it, may be gain'd and possess'd without God's Consent, Concurrence, or Approbation. For though he tells us, that his Son is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life"; they say, there is no need of his Son. Though he promises Forgiveness upon our Repentance and Belief in his Son; they allow Repen-
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tance to be saving without him, and expose Belief in him as unnecessary; though he threatens Damnation to all that are Impenitent and Unbelievers, they regard not his Threatning; but declare, that let them be of any Sect, if they live up to their Reason, they may escape.

Are not these therefore worthy of a Curse, who thus contradict the Revelation of God? Do not they deserve to be stigmatiz'd, who at once make void the Gospel, and give the Lye to the Word of God? Or can their Charity be well-grounded, who would seem to have more Compassion than God himself, and promise Mercy to those that he threatens with his Wrath, and entitle those to Salvation, which he declares shall be damned? Or is their Moderation to be allowed, who make void, as much as in them lies, that Revelation which was confirm'd with Miracles, and published by the Son of God; and set up their own Fancy in the Room of it? But let them be as moderate as they will, I would fain know by what Law we shall be judged in the Great Day; by what Principle we shall stand or fall before the Divine Tribunal; by the Gospel of Jesus, or by their Principles? For if their Fancies will not stand them in any Stead, then they are not to be trusted. Now I must therefore enquire by what Law we shall then be judged, acquitted, or condemned: If by the Gospel, then it is manifest, that their Principle (as fashionable as it is now) will be out of Date then, and that if none can be sav'd, but those that obey the Gospel of Jesus; they deserve to be curst, who draw the Souls of Men into such apparent Hazards, and promise Salvation to those that shall not obtain it. But our Church pronounces no more against them, than what St. Paul hath taught us, who expressly says, *Though we or an Angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel unto you, than that which we have preached, let him be accursed.*

Gal. i. 8.

And if he made no Scruple to curse himself, or an Angel from Heaven, that preach'd another Gospel, another Way to Heaven, or Way of serving God, than what he had preached by Jesus Christ; our Church must be justified when she curses those that approve of another Way, and recommend themselves to the World by the plausible Insinuations of Charity and Moderation; especially considering that St. Paul repeats the same again. *As I said before, so say I now again, If any Man preach any other Gospel unto you, than that ye have receiv'd, let him be accursed.*

Gal. i. 9.

III. The Reason is here given to warrant this Anathema, which is this; The Holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the Name of Jesus, whereby we must be sav'd. And as that declares, that Jesus is the Saviour of the World, 'tis great Rashness in any to despise him, and to trust to any other Way, than what he hath establish'd. For 'tis only Revelation can acquaint us with the Will of God in this Point. And our Church looks upon the Holy Scripture to contain that Revelation, or the full and compleat Discovery of God's Mind concerning our Souls; and therefore we believe that the Holy Scripture can "make us wise unto Salvation", and can guide us to Life

Life and Happiness, and that the same Jesus the Holy Scripture sets forth, and recommends to our Belief, is Lord and Christ, the Son of God and Saviour of all Men, and that we can have no Pardon but in his Name, no Favour but by his Hands, no Acceptance but upon his Intercession, and no Salvation but by his Merits and Power: And as we judge him to be "the Way, the Truth, and the Life", we own that there is no other Way but by him, no saving Truth but what he publish'd, and no Eternal Life to be had, but what he gives; and therefore our Church had great Reason to pronounce this Curse against the Enemies of our Saviour, who dare equal the falsest Prophets to him, and represent any Way as saving as his. St. Peter boldly asserts the contrary, when in his Justification he tells the Jews; *This is the Stone, which was set at nought by you Builders, which is become the Head of the Corner: Neither is there Salvation in any other, for there is none other Name under Heaven given amongst Men, whereby we must be saved.*

Act. 4. 11, 12.

From this Account of the Article, I must desire you to consider, that the Dissenters subscribe this Article; That the true Sons of our Church are hereby warranted to oppose this growing Opinion; That it is incumbent upon us to keep to the Sentiments of the Church; And that allowing as much Moderation and Charity to those that hold the Foundation, as can be desired, we cannot be blam'd.

1. The Dissenters subscribe this Article; as much as they are for Moderation and Forbearance in other Respects, they join with us in this Curse, and declare as well as we, that they are to be held accursed that presume to say, That every Man shall be saved by the Law or Sect which he professes, and (to do them right) stand up for the Honour of our Lord, and expect Salvation by him. But then I could wish that they were aware of those Men, who under the Pretence of Moderation, corrupt the Age, and cry up that Latitude, which approves of all Religions. For it is apparent, that under these Notions, the Theists abound amongst us; reveal'd Religion is spoken against, and our common Lord is vilify'd. Though such Notions were wont to travel in Secret, they are now publish'd to the World, and under the Authority of Reason, would challenge the Approbation of the World: And therefore it is incumbent upon all, that have subscribed this Article, and pronounced this Curse against them, to be upon their Guard, and not so much as to countenance any, that covertly propagate this Opinion, though they seem to be most forward and zealous for Moderation. For can any true Christian forbear to speak, when our Holy Religion is spoken against, and the Author of it expos'd as counterfeit? *Who will have all Men to be saved, and to come to the Knowledge of the Truth: For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and Men, the Man Christ Jesus.*

1 Tim. 2. 4, 5.

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2 Joh. 10.

2. The true Sons of the Church are hereby warranted to oppose this growing Opinion. For as the Church curses those that vilify our Lord and Master, we may be allowed to call upon you to take heed, that ye approve not of that dangerous Latitude, which threatens Christianity it self. We may have heard how bold Atheists are against the Living God, and commend those that rebuke them. Shall we not be as zealous against Theists, that own a God, and deny his Son? Shall we not reprove them, when they plead for Moderation, and put them in Mind of this Curse that is in Force against them? Can they pretend to Charity who deny their Lord that bought them? Or shall they pass for Religious, who expect to be sav'd without him? May they pass for Harmless, that look upon *Mahometans* to be in as salvable a Condition as Christians, and would make you believe, that any Sect is as good as yours, and any Law as good as the Gospel? If we love our Church, we must justify her Anathema, which she hath pronounc'd against such Men. And let them appear in any Shape, or under any Disguise; let them be Time-Servers, or *Machiavel*-Politicians; if they deny our Common Lord, and refuse to be sav'd by his Blood; if they commend any other Way of Worship, and entail Salvation upon it; let them be accursed till they see into their Mistake, submit to our Lord, and acknowledge their Repentance. For "with God there is no Respect of Persons. He that denieth the Son, denieth the Father also": And he that denieth Father and Son, how can he be safe or happy? Or how can he be credited, or trusted amongst us? When such Men fawn'd upon the Christians in St. *John's* Time, he advises, not to meddle with them, or to shew them any Countenance. *If there come any unto you, and bring not this Doctrine, receive him not into your House, neither bid him God speed.*

3. Allowing as much Moderation and Charity to those that hold the Foundation, and hope for Salvation by Jesus, as can be desired, we cannot be blam'd for cursing those that lay another Foundation, and publish another Way to Heaven. For as there is but one Faith, one Baptism, one Lord, and one God, the Father of us all; we must speak for this Faith, must plead for this Lord, and must vindicate the Revelation of this One Eternal God, by which he would have all Men saved, and come to the Knowledge of his Son. And if any think that our Zeal is too hot, which is discovered in the Behalf of these Truths, and that we ought not to be so forward in pronouncing Curses; let them know, that this is the Voice of our Church, and that it is judged to be so reasonable, that the Dissenters pronounce the same with us; and that it is the Duty of every Christian to hold the Foundation, to keep to Jesus Christ. Let Atheists, Theists, and *Machiavels*, plead what they can to the contrary; let them cry aloud for Charity, and talk of Moderation: For is this their Principle or not? May any be saved in their own Way, without Jesus Christ, or no? If they think they may, they are already under the Curse, and no Charity can lighten it, or Moderation take it off; not all their Wheedling can alter it, or Flattery free them from

from it : For if they deny our Lord, they are accursed, and none can help it.

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When any therefore plead for Charity or Moderation, consider who they are, what Religion they profess, and what Design they have. For if they hold the Foundation, Charity is due to them, no Man denies it, let them enjoy their Conscience till our Lord comes. But if they deny the Foundation, what Right have they to that Charity they plead for? Or what Good will Moderation do them? For unless they return, they are, and will be cursed. The most that we can do for such, is to pray to God for them, that they may see into their Error, and own the Lord that died for them; that the Curse may be taken off, and that they may be blessed: But if they persist in their Error, as "there is no Peace for the Wicked", there can be no Blessing for them. *Thou shalt break them with a Rod of Iron, thou shalt dash them in Pieces like a Potter's Vessel.*

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ARTICLE XIX.

ACTS II. Latter Part of the 47th Verse.

And the Lord added to the Church daily, such as should be saved.

WHEN the Christian Church began, it consisted of our Saviour and his Apostles; soon increased with Evangelists and Believers; and after his Resurrection, and the miraculous Descent of the Holy Ghost, it grew apace, became Thousands, too many to meet together in one Place. **And the Lord added to the Church daily, such as should be saved.** Which may point out the Nineteenth Article of our Church, which says:

"The visible Church of Christ is a Congregation of Faithful Men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly administer'd, according to Christ's Ordinance, in all those Things that of Necessity are requisite to the same. As the Church of *Jerusalem*, *Alexandria*, and *Antioch*, have erred; so also the Church of *Rome* hath erred, not only in their Living and Manner of Ceremonies, but also in Matters of Faith".

Thus the Article. In which I shall consider;

I. That the Visible Church of Christ and Christians, is a Society of Faithful Men, or a Congregation.

II. In this the pure Word of God, and no other, is to be preached, and the Sacraments to be duly administered, according to Christ's Ordinance, in all those Things that of Necessity are requisite to the same.

III. That as the Church of *Jerusalem*, *Alexandria*, and *Antioch* have erred; so also hath the Church of *Rome*, not only in their Living, and Manner of Ceremonies, but also in Matters of Faith.

I. The Visible Church of Christ is a Society, or Congregation of Faithful Men; or at least of those which pretend to be such; who solemnly profess their Belief and Faith in Jesus, and promise constant and humble Obedience to him; such as are duly admitted into the same Congregation of Christ's Flock by Baptism, and vow and covenant to pay him all Duty and Allegiance, as their Sovereign Lord, and engage to be governed and judg'd by his Gospel. This Admission, Covenant, and Profession is sufficient to constitute a Member of the Visible Church, which is Militant here upon Earth; and that particular Congregation, that is made up of Evangelical Gover-

vernors and Pastors, and professing Christians, is a Particular Visible Church or Congregation; and all the Particular Congregations, that are scattered through the whole World, in different Nations and Kingdoms, consider'd as one Body, with their several Governors, Pastors, and People, make up that one Visible Catholick Church, which began at Jerusalem, and is now scattered through all the World; which we acknowledge in our Cress, and whereof Christ is the Head, which is his Body; and for this Reason it is as impotent for any single Church, National, Provincial, or Congregational, to call itself the Catholick Church, as it would be for us in this Place to call our selves all England, or for the Head or Foot to call it self the whole Body. For Particular Churches, whether National, Provincial, or Congregational, are but particular Parts and Limbs of this Catholick Church. As the Church at Corinth was but one Part, at Colossus was but another Part, at Jerusalem another Part; and so the rest, wherever situated or dispersed, were but Parts of Christ's Body. And 'tis full as reasonable for Jerusalem to pretend, that it contains all the Cities of the World; or for Corinth to boast, that it is the only Habitation for Men; as for Rome to challenge the Name of Catholick, or to glory in being the Universal Church. The Church of England is one Part of this Visible Catholick Church; the Church of Ireland is another; and so all the World over, the Churches of several Nations and Dominions are but several Parts of this Catholick Church. And let Rome boast as much as she pleases, that Church is but a Part, and perhaps a very small one too, in Comparison of the vast Multitudes of faithful Men, that profess their Belief in the Lord Jesus. Nay, it is an unsound Part at present, whatever it was formerly, and cannot be safely trusted with the Souls of Men. When therefore we read of the Church of Christ in Cities or Families, we are to look upon them as particular and distinct Parts of the Visible Congregation of Christ, or Members of his Body: And it would be as improper for any distinct Part to challenge the Privilege of being the whole Body, or Church of Christ, as for the Eye, or the Ear, or the Hand, to monopolize to it self the whole Body; whereas the Christians over all the World, in different Climates and Nations, are but this one Visible Congregation, or Church of Christ. For as the Body is one, and hath many Members, and all the Members of that one Body, being many are one Body, so also is Christ: For by one Spirit we are all baptiz'd into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit, and one Church.

I Cor. 12.
12, 13.

II. In this Congregation the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly administer'd according to Christ's Ordinance, in all those Things, that of Necessity are requisite to the same.

I. The pure Word of God is to be preached or declar'd to Christians: And that this may be done, it is necessary, that there be lawful Pastors in it, commissioned to preach; That the Word be pure, suffi-

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sufficient, without Traditions to build it up; and that when such Pastors preach the pure Word, it constitutes the best Visible Church in the World.

First, This supposes it necessary, that there be lawful Pastors, commission'd from above, to preach this Word: For "how shall they preach, except they be sent"? Or with what Face can they take upon them the Ministry, unless they receive Power from above? 'Tis not the Pretence that they are Gifted will serve their Turn; for then every conceited Bigot may set up to be a Teacher, and a good Memory and quick Invention must be infallible Credentials of the Ministry: Nor may the People offer to Commission any to instruct them; for then every humourful Club of conceited Zealots may heap up Teachers of their own, having itching Ears, and they may vainly divide, and subdivide, as the Fit takes them, in the Promotion of new Teachers. And admitting this, there could be no Unity in the World, for in a little Time there might be as many different Religions, or Ways of Worship, as there may be Congregations. But these Pastors must be sent by God, called to the Ministry by his Son, or set a-part by the Apostles and their Successors, for that solemn Work, that they may be able to divide the Word of Truth aright, to give to every one their Spiritual Food in due Season, and to build up the Body of Christ. And as he was sent by the Father, and the Apostles by him, the Bishops, and Presbyters, and Deacons, by the Apostles; I cannot see how any other can challenge any Authority to preach the pure Word of God, or how such Congregations can be undoubted Members of Christ's Body, that have not those Teachers, which originally receiv'd or deriv'd their ministerial Powers from Christ or his Apostles. I am sure what St. Paul says is true, and that those who are sent in the same Manner, are the true Ministers of the Gospel in the Church of Christ. *And he gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ.*

Eph. 4. 11, 12.

Secondly, The pure Word of God, without Traditions, is to build up this Church; and let but that be taught as it ought, and obtain in the Estimation of Men; and all the Inventions of Superstition, which are recommended by the venerable Name of Traditions, will sink in their Credit, and in a little Time become useless. For to what Purpose should honest faithful Men, such as the Church ought to be compos'd of, who sincerely design to please God in Christ, seek for any other Instruction, when they have the pure Word of God before them, and faithful Pastors that explain it to them? Can they have any clearer Guide than the pure Word of God? Or can any human Invention stand in Competition with it? How can any upright Man desire any surer Guide, or better Rule? They may know very well, that what is reveal'd, is true, and must be necessary: But they can never be certain, that the Principles which are not contain'd in the Word, nor can be prov'd by any plain Consequence from it, can be the Will and Pleasure of God, though

though urged as necessary to be believ'd and practis'd, and urg'd as the Voice of the Church, and recommended by a pretended infallible Guide. Whilst we keep to the pure and unmix'd Word of God, explain'd to us by his Ministry, we cannot mistake; but if we recede from it, and give heed to Fables, we cannot tell whither we go: It is necessary therefore, that in the Church of Christ, the pure Word of God be preach'd, that Men may be guided into the plain and direct Way to Heaven: Whether Men or Children, they are then directed with Safety. *From a Child thou hast known the holy Scriptures,* 2 Tim. 3. 15. *which are able to make thee wise unto Salvation.*

Thirdly, The pure Word of God thus preach'd by faithful Pastors, makes the best Visible Church of Christ upon Earth; or the more any Member of the Catholick Church is so guided and instructed, the better Particular Church it must needs be. For no Rule can be safer or more edifying than the pure Word of God, and no Pastors can be better trusted, than those that succeed the Apostles, and explain the Word as the Primitive Christians did. For this Reason, those Particular Churches, that do not admit the pure Word of God for their Rule, nor allow the Successors of the Apostles to be their Pastors, are so far started aside from the Primitive Simplicity, and degenerated from the Truth. And whatever Church closes and seals up the pure Word of God, and will not permit it to be read by the People, and obtrudes Traditions in the Room of it, that Church corrupts it self; and though it may retain a Name to live, and value it self for the swelling Titles of Catholick and Infallible, it is so far gone off from the Principles of the Catholick Church: And whatever Particular Congregation refuses to be taught and govern'd by the Successors of the Apostles, though it pretends to submit to the pure Word of God, deceives it self, heaps up Teachers without Authority, and disobeyes the Commission which was entrusted to the Pastors of the Catholick Church: And therefore to make up the Visible Church of Christ, the pure Word of God is to be preach'd by those that are sent, and authoriz'd by Christ. *How shall they preach, except they be sent? Have they not heard? Yes, verily their sound went into all the Earth, and their Words unto the ends of the World.* Rom. 10. 15, the first Part. 18.

2. The Sacraments also are to be administer'd according to Christ's Ordinance in all Things, that of Necessity are requisite to the same. Thus Baptism is to be administer'd with Water, without Spittle, and the fulsome Ceremonies of Rome, in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ is to be administer'd with Bread and Wine, "which the Lord hath commanded to be received": And the Laity is to partake of the Cup as well as others; because it is written, "Drink ye all of this". For thus much is necessary and requisite for the due Administration of these Sacraments, according to Christ's Ordinance. What then shall be said to those, who deny the Use of the Sacraments, as necessary to a Christian Church, and call them carnal Ordinances? Or by what Means do they become Members of Christ's Visible Flock, who separate, and allow a Covenant to be

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XIX.1 Cor. 10.
15, 16, 17.

the Bond of Unity, and not the Sacrament of Baptism? However they may stand or fall before our Common Master, we are sure that as the Sacraments are to be duly administer'd in Christ's Visible Church, so they are administer'd in our Church according to Christ's Ordinance, in all those Things that are requisite and necessary to the same, by proper Pastors in an Apostolical Manner, for the Union and Edification of the Flock of Christ. *I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say; the Cup of Blessing which we bless, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ? the Bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ? For we being many are one Bread, and one Body; for we are all Partakers of that one Bread.*

III. As the Churches of *Jerusalem*, *Alexandria*, and *Antioch*, have erred, so also the Church of *Rome* hath erred, not only in their Living, and Manner of Ceremonies, but also in Matters of Faith.

I. The Churches of *Jerusalem*, *Alexandria*, and *Antioch* have erred, in denying the Divinity of our Saviour, and admitting other Errors; and yet if their being founded by Apostles, and built up in the Faith, could have secur'd them from Error, they might have vy'd with *Rome* it self, and pretended to as much Infallibility, and more also. For *Jerusalem* was founded by our Saviour, and if that had been a Privilege for Infallibility, she might have challeng'd it from Christ. *Antioch* was really founded by St. *Peter*; he liv'd there for some Years; and the Followers of Jesus were first called Christians there: And if his pretended Residence at *Rome* gives the Pope a Right to Infallibility, the Patriarch of *Antioch* hath the prior Right, and the better Claim. But notwithstanding these Advantages, these Churches have erred; for particular Churches hold their Integrity, upon their Obedience; and if they fail in Duty, God may permit them to err from the Truth; and 'tis only the Catholic Church which shall never fail. For by Virtue of the Divine Promise, somewhere or other the Gospel shall obtain, and the Truth shall be receiv'd, till the Coming of Christ; and no Policy or Force of Men or Hell shall prevail against it: For it is built upon the Truth of the Gospel, which *Peter* acknowledg'd, when he said to our Lord, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God". And this is that Rock which is the Foundation, and which shall remain unshaken to the End of the World. *And I say also unto thee, Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build my Church, and the Gates of Hell shall never prevail against it.*

Matt. 16. 18.

2. The Church of *Rome* hath erred also, not only in their Living, for in all Churches there are too many, that walk not according to the Gospel; or in their Ceremonies; for they command such a Multitude, which are neither proper nor decent, which cloy the Service of God, and are made a Burthen to the People; but also in Matters of Faith, or in their Principles concerning the Faith of Christ, either as a Church, or as the Popes are reputed the Heads of their Church. As a Church, *Rome* hath erred in Faith, by decreeing at *Trent* a new Creed: Tradition by them is equall'd to Scripture; Invo-

Invocation of Saints is enjoin'd, as well as calling upon God ; worshipping of Images is establish'd for divine Worship ; Transubstantiation, or the turning the Bread and Wine into the very Body and Blood of Christ, is asserted in the Sacrament ; Communion in one Kind is commanded for the Laity ; the Propitiatory Sacrifice of the Mass is made a current Doctrine ; Veneration of Relicks, Indulgences, and Purgatory, with many other Fancies, are Proof sufficient, that *Rome* hath err'd as a Church in Matters of Faith. And if it be objected, that these are only the Sentiments of Doctors and Councils, I must reply, that the Pope their Head warrants these as Articles of Faith, which must be sworn to by those that are entrusted with the Care of Souls. But there is no Credit in alledging the Authority of Popes, for many of them have err'd in a shameful Manner : For *Marcellinus* burn'd Incense to Idols, in the Time of *Diocletian* : *Liberius* subscrib'd to the *Arian* Heresy : And *Celestine* decreed contrary to *St. Paul*, that Marriage is dissolv'd, when either Party falls into Heresy. So that take the Church of *Rome* in any Sense, either in Pope or Council, she hath erred from the Faith, and must be esteem'd as fallen from Christ, and not fit to be trusted with our Souls. So that what *St. Paul* said once of her, cannot now be applied to her with so much Truth ; *To all that be in Rome, Beloved of God, and called to be Saints, Grace to you, and Peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Rom. i. 7.

By this time ye may see how necessary it is for you, to stand up for the Honour and Safety of our Church ; How proper to vindicate her from favouring *Rome* ; And how much it will be our Glory to be Faithful, as she teaches us to be.

1. By this time ye may see how necessary it is for you to stand up for the Honour and Safety of our Church, which is by Profession a Congregation of Faithful People, enjoying the pure Word of God, and the Sacraments in a pure Manner. For who among us, owning this Apostolical Church, and taught by the Ministry of Jesus, can refuse to speak in her Behalf, and to vindicate her from Contempt ? We see how zealous others can be, who differ from the Truth, and how earnestly they contend for their own Inventions ; and shall we be lukewarm in the Defence of our Excellent Church ? Shall we be silent when Truth is concern'd ; or slothful, when our Industry may contribute to our Safety ? Or shall we own our Church here, and deny it elsewhere ; Shall we hold Communion with it, and give Sentence against it ? Or can we be so blind, as not to see and promote her Interest, or so unfaithful, as to join with her Enemies against her ? Is it possible that those who oppose her, should understand her Safety best ? That such as have sought to undermine her, can instruct you in that which is for her Good ; or that her very Enemies can tell better than her Friends, better than her Governors, and better than her Ministers, what will tend to her Advantage ? Are we grown so soft, so unwise, so inconsiderate, that we cannot mind our own Good, our particular Interest, or our common Safety ? And can the Meanest of the People, nay, our profess'd Enemies, inform us much better, what we are to do ? Shall I say, that

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Psal. 41. 9.

I am asham'd, that any in our Communion should be so deceiv'd and misled? That any that are Members of the best Church in the World, should not be sensible of the Honour of it? Or that they should so far forget themselves, as to act against her in Conjunction with her Enemies? She may then say with the Psalmist; *Yea mine own familiar Friend, in whom I trusted; which did eat of my Bread, hath lift up his heel against me.*

1 Tim. 3. 15.

2. We may now vindicate her from favouring Rome, when she plainly declares, That that Church hath err'd in Matters of Faith. For how can we be Friends to Popery, when we solemnly declare that it is dangerous? Or how can we be accessory in bringing of it in again, when we show you the Errors, and warn you against the Superstition of it? Are we fit to be believed? Or is our Church of any Authority with you? How can it be then imagin'd, much less publish'd, even by some amongst us, that we are hasting to Rome? What will not some Men invent and suggest; and what will not some believe and report? If Slander may be allow'd to travel thus at Noon-Day, and Calumny blacken the best of Churches; we must be the freer with you, and tell you plainly, whether you will believe or not, that as this Article is against Rome, so is our Church, and so we shall be to our last Breath. And this I speak, that *thou mayest know how to behave thy self in the House of God, which is the Church of the Living God, the Pillar and Ground (or Stay) of Truth.*

Acts 20. 29.

3. It will be our Praise and Glory to be Faithful, as our Church teaches us: That we may shew that we are faithful to Christ and her, to the Word, and therein to her Interest, to our Governors and Pastors, and to our Souls; that we may not profess one Thing here, and the contrary elsewhere; or pretend to be her Friends, and act as her Enemies; or which is the same Thing, count our selves wiser than our Church, and join with her Enemies to save her. For *I know this, that after my departure shall grievous Wolves enter in among you, not sparing the Flock.*

ARTICLE XX.

TIM. III. Latter Part of the 15th Verse.

Which is the Church of the Living God, the Pillar and Ground of the Truth.

AS the Church is a Society of Faithful Men, it must be under Government, and should keep up that Order, which may turn to the Edification of the Whole: And since Time and Place are necessary for all Worship, and the Administration of the Sacraments: She may appoint either, with all due Circumstances, and enjoin those in Communion with her, to observe them. And as she may thus provide for the Decency of her Service, she has Authority to declare and maintain the Faith of Christ, when any Controversy arises about it: **For the Church of the Living God, is the Pillar and Ground of the Truth.**

Which gives us the Sense of the Twentieth Article of our Church, which says, "The Church hath Power to decree Rites or Ceremonies, and Authority in Controversies of Faith: And yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain any Thing, that is contrary to God's Word; neither may it so explain one Place of Scripture, that it be repugnant to another. Wherefore although the Church be a Witness, and Keeper of Holy Writ; yet as it ought not to decree any Thing against the same, so besides the same, ought it not to enforce any Thing to be believ'd for Necessity of Salvation". Here we see,

- I. The Church's Power: The Church has Power to decree Rites or Ceremonies, and Authority in Controversies of Faith.
- II. The Limitation of that Power: And yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain any Thing, that is contrary to God's Word; neither may it explain one Place of Scripture, that it be repugnant to another.
- III. The Consequence drawn from this: Wherefore although the Church be a Witness, and a Keeper of Holy Writ; yet as it may not decree any Thing against the same; so besides the same ought it not to enforce any Thing to be believ'd for Necessity of Salvation.

I. The Power of the Church: The Church has Power to decree Ceremonies, and Authority in Controversies of Faith.

1. As to Ceremonies to be used in Divine Service, the Church hath, and ever had Power, to decree or ordain them: For as Cir-

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cumstances must be appointed and appropriated to the Worship of God, 'tis requisite that the Governors of the Church should set forth and enjoin the Way and Method of proceeding in it; that the Fancies of private Men may be confin'd; and that there may be no Disorder and Confusion in their Attendance; and that she should select and command the Use of those Ceremonies, which may set forth and solemnize the Divine Worship with the greater Reverence and Decency. And accordingly in the Primitive Churches, there were some peculiar Customs and Rites, which were constantly made use of in their publick Assemblies, and scarce any Two Churches exactly agreed in them, it being left to the Liberty of every Church, to appoint what Ceremonies their different States and Emergencies of Affairs requir'd, keeping to that Apostolical Rule, *Let all things be done decently and in order.*

1 Cor. 14. 40.

2. As Controversies concerning the Christian Faith will arise, the Church hath Authority to concern herself in them; *i. e.* she ought to publish and declare the true Faith, in Opposition to those Errors that obtain in the World: She must bear Witness or give Testimony concerning that which was once delivered unto the Saints, and convey'd down from the Apostles to us, and ought to recommend it powerfully to the Acceptance of others. As the Truth was deposited in her Hands, to be kept and preserved entire for the Use of Posterity, she must employ her Spiritual Authority in exhorting to keep steddily to it, in rebuking those that depart from it; and if Reproofs make no Impression, in exercising her Discipline and Censures, as well to put a Stop to the Progress of Error, as to reclaim those that are seduc'd by it. Thus she has done in all Ages to this Day, and thus she is bound to do, as Occasion requires, to the End of the World; let Men of Latitude oppose what they can: For if she is a Society, of which Christ is the Head, she must have Authority agreeable to her Constitution, and may and ought to apply it for her Purity and Preservation: Therein she follows the Exhortation of St. Jude; *It was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you, that ye should earnestly contend for the Faith, which was once delivered unto the Saints.*

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latter Part.

II. The Limitation of this Power is this, she may not dictate contrary to God's Word, or presume to set up Error by Scripture.

1st. This Limitation of Authority was very requisite, that falling into some Hands it may not be abus'd and apply'd to ill Purposes: For she may not set up that to be believ'd and practis'd, which the Scripture contradicts. For as God is the Supreme Lawgiver and Governor of his Church, he commands that his Word shall be the Rule of Faith and Manners to the End of the World; notwithstanding any Claim or Challenge some may make to decree contrary to it; for the Authority of God is greater, than the greatest Man upon Earth, and will bind the Conscience, notwithstanding any Humane Decree to the contrary. If therefore a famous Church decrees, That Images are to be worshipped, and curses those that deny it, we may not comply with it; because the Scripture says, "Thou shalt

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"shalt not worship any graven Image, or the Likeness of any Thing". Or if the same Church positively determines, that the very Body and Blood of Christ is under the Accidents of Bread and Wine in the Sacrament, and curses those that will not believe it; we may not credit her, because the Scripture saith, "The Bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ"? And so in any other Cases, whatever particular Church abuses her Authority, and decrees that, which upon a fair Hearing, and full Evidence, appears to be contrary to the Word of God, she may not be trusted, her Decrees are void in themselves, and not to be regarded. For it is the Word of God, which is appointed to be our Rule and Guide, and by which we must stand, and shall be judged: As it will be found in the Day when God shall judge the Secrets of Men by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel. Rom. 2. 16.

2. As it is not lawful to decree any Thing contrary to Scripture, so it is not lawful to set up Error under Pretence of it, or to expound one Place of Scripture so as to be repugnant to another, or to pick out some obscure Places, and to interpret them in Favour of known Errors, as hath been the Custom of Deceivers in all Ages: For they have strictly examined the Scripture, and whatever Word or Sentence could be turn'd to their Purpose, hath been mightily improv'd, and set up in Defiance to many other Places to the contrary. Hence it is that all Parties pretend to Scripture, and the very worst of Heresies endeavour to sweeten and sanctify their Opinions, with some few Shreds of the Holy Text. Thus because it is said, that "Christ is the Light, and that he enlighteneth every Man that cometh into the World": There are those that set up the Light within, to be the Guide to Eternal Life. And because it is said, "to the Clean all Things are clean"; there are those that under the Disguise of being Clean, are religiously vicious, sensual, and brutish. But this is to cull out little Sentences to contradict the whole Book: When in all Reason the plainest Places are to clear up the Sense of the obscure; for the Word of God, as a Revelation of his Will through Jesus Christ, is plain in all that is necessary to Salvation: And the Design of it is clearly this, to lead us from Sin unto God; and whatever difficult Passage is alledg'd to the contrary, must be mistaken. For this is the Will of God, even your Sanctification, that ye abstain from Fornication. 1 Thes. 4. 3.

III. The proper Consequence drawn from this, is, The Church, though a Keeper of Holy Writ, must not decree any Thing contrary to Scripture, or enforce it to be believ'd as necessary to Salvation.

I. Here is a Concession, that the Church is a Keeper of Holy Writ, or "the Pillar and Ground of Truth", as hath been found by Experience. For by what Providence and Care, under the Divine Blessing, is it, that we have the Bible in our own Language before us, but by the Church's, which from our Saviour's Days to ours, hath preserv'd that Sacred Book entire, and handed it down to us? She hath secur'd it in the Times of Persecution; and when some gave it up, and were call'd *Traditores*, she preserv'd it with the utmost

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Rom. 3. 2.

most Care, and conceal'd it from those designing Enemies, who intended by destroying the Bible, to put an end to Christianity at once; and deliver'd it as she receiv'd it, to succeeding Generations, as we find to our great Comfort: The Church is therefore doubtless a proper and competent Witness, and Keeper of the Holy Writ, and can best tell, which is the Sacred Canon, and direct us how to value and preserve it. For as the Old Testament was committed to the Care of the Jews, both Old and New are now deposited in the Church's Custody, to secure them from Innovation, Change, or Detriment. *Much advantage have the Jews every way, chiefly because unto them were committed the Oracles of God.*

Matt. 18. 17.

2. As the Church ought not to decree any Thing against the Scripture, it may not enforce a new Faith upon the Consciences of Men, or any Thing new to be believ'd of Necessity to Salvation: It is too much to decree any Thing in Opposition to Scripture, but intolerable Presumption to force Men to believe that as coming from God, which is but the Invention of Man: For this in effect equals the Decrees of the Church to the Word of God; nay, as such contradict the Mind of Christ, it exalts and sets them above it; and were such Power admitted, it might invent another Faith, warrant a new Religion, and by Degrees not only endanger the Christian Faith, but the Bible too. So much Reason hath our Church to stand up for the Authority of the Scriptures, and to oppose any Claims or Pretences, which in Time might abate of their Credit, and undermine Christianity it self. The Advice which our Saviour gives to private Christians, when they offend one another, is applicable to Churches also, when some of them presume too much, stretch their Authority too far, decree against the Scriptures, and employ the Secular Powers to enforce the Belief of that, which they constitute as necessary to Salvation. *And if he shall neglect to bear them, tell it unto the Church (the Catholick Church); but if he neglect to bear the Church, let him be to thee as an beaten Man and a Publican.*

From hence I must take an Occasion to free the first Part of the Article from the Scandal of Forgery; to shew, That though the Dissenters refuse to subscribe that Part, they challenge and use the same Authority more or less in their Churches: To assure you, that our Church is as much for Liberty of Conscience, as can be desir'd; and that it is our Safety to be in her Communion, when we live as directed by her.

1. I must free the first Part of the Article from the Scandal of Forgery. For it is pretended that these Words, which the Dissenters are excus'd by the Act of Toleration from owning, viz. "The Church hath Power to decree Rites or Ceremonies, and Authority in Controversies of Faith", are not to be found in the Records of the Convocation; and that for that Reason, they were clandestinely put in by Priest-Craft, and are the Addition of some private Men, who design'd to advance the Power of the Church farther than the Convocation agreed. This, if true, is a heavy Charge, and

and reflects upon the Body of the Clergy in those Days. But if we consider the latter Part of the Article, it directs, in my Apprehension, to the beginning of it now mention'd ; for if it is not lawful to decree any Thing, that is contrary to God's Word, then the Church hath a Power to ordain something. And what can that be, but that which the Word of God hath not commanded ? What but Rites and Ceremonies, which God hath left to the Discretion of the Governors of it, to appoint for Decency and Order ? And therefore I cannot but think, that the Prohibition to ordain any Thing against God's Word, presupposes that the Church hath Power to declare Rites and Ceremonies ; and that the Beginning of the Article was the same, when the Article came from the Convocation, that it is now ; especially considering, that an Omission in some Records is no very good Argument against the Reality of it : For I have by me a Copy of these Articles, printed in the Year 1585, dedicated to the Bishop of *Norwich*, and Sir *Christopher Hatton* Lord Chancellor, allow'd by Authority ; which contains the same Words ; and the Ratification of them by Queen *Elizabeth* was in the Year 1571 : So that there is but Fourteen Years difference between my Copy and the Royal Assent. Now can it be imagin'd, that in Fourteen Years Time, this Addition could creep in, and not be observ'd ; that it could be own'd and warranted as Part of the Article ; that it could be allow'd of by Authority, and supported by the great Names of a Bishop and Lord Chancellor in its Reputation, commented upon and receiv'd as the Sense of the Church, and yet be a Forgery ? Would the Authority of the Nation suffer such a Cheat to go unpunished ? Or the Publisher of it to escape ? Or did the Queen and Council connive at such a publick Abuse, and permit it to gain Credit, when they knew it was not in the Original ? We must either think that all about the Queen were asleep, or worse, if they did not know that this was Part of the Article, or knowing it to be false, did not timely discover it. But in all likelihood the first Part of it is as Authentick as the last. For *Charles* the Martyr, in the Year 1630, caus'd the Articles to be Reprinted with his Declaration, and this Part of the Article is the same that I have explain'd ; and he was so far from thinking it surreptitious or forg'd, that he declares that no Man hereafter shall either print or preach, to draw the Articles aside any way ; but shall submit to them, in the plain and full Meaning of them. We may therefore without Danger or Suspicion receive the Article as it stands amongst the rest ; for in Reason there can be no Forgery in it.

2. Though the Dissenters are excus'd from subscribing this Part, yet they challenge and use more or less of this Authority in their Churches : For they have their Rites and Ceremonies, their different Methods and Ways, by which they distinguish themselves from others. And 'tis by the Power they challenge, as inherent in the Church, that they appoint the Circumstances of Worship ; that some appoint one Method of receiving Members, others another Way of constituting a Church. But if they challenge this Authority, and ex-

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exercise it among themselves ; we may with greater Reason maintain it, as belonging to us ; and though they are not oblig'd to subscribe it, yet since they more or less use it, they have the less Reason to complain against us, or to cry up the Unreasonableness of it ; unless they think that only their own Church hath this Power to decree Rites and Ceremonies, and that no other is invested with it ; or that none can or shall deprive them of the Liberty of decreeing for themselves. But after all, there is no doubt, but those that use this Power, could, if they pleased, subscribe the Article, let their Conscience be what it will ; for no Man can with Reason refuse to own a Power, which his own Church exercises every Day. And indeed unless a Church hath such a Power latent in it, to be us'd as Time and Place may require, I cannot see how the Order of it can be preserv'd, or the Christian Faith secur'd. And therefore St. Paul's Rule may warrant our Church in the Use of this Power : *For God is not the Author of Confusion, but of Peace, as in all Churches of the Saints, (that are truly such).*

1 Cor. 14. 33.

3. I must assure you from a View of this Article, that our Church is as much for Liberty of Conscience as any can desire : For she would have no new Articles of Faith made, nothing as necessary decreed, which the Scripture hath not made necessary. Nor does she think fit that any Force should be us'd, to obtrude such Innovations upon the Consciences of Men. So that where Liberty is necessary and proper, she approves of it, and recommends it. She would have the Scriptures freed from Enclosure, that they may be seen, read, examin'd, and understood by all : And she allows Conscience to be free, to inform it self, and to believe for it self ; and desires not that any Untruth should be thrust upon it, to choak or injure it, under the Reputation of an Article of Faith. For 'tis her declared Sense, that as she ought not to decree any Thing against the Word, so she must not and ought not to enforce any Thing to be believ'd for Necessity of Salvation, which is not to be found in the Word ; which is as much as the most Conscientious can in Reason desire. I must therefore desire you to observe, that this very Article displays to view the Moderation of our Church, her Care of Souls, and the Liberty she allows to every one, to consider without Restraint, what the Word of God proposes ; to believe without Force, what is necessary to Eternal Life ; and to practise with all Care, what must be done, as we expect to be happy. And as much as some have accus'd her of Persecution, she hath us'd Moderation in the true Sense of the word, in an exemplary Manner ; for provided Men will judge of the Word, and her Discipline with upright Hearts, they will find that she neither imposes upon their Understandings nor Wills, neither forces them along to believe any Thing, nor constrains them to submit to unreasonable Demands ; but leaves them to consider as Men of Understanding, to chuse as Men of perfect Liberty, to be as good and vertuous as God hath commanded, and offers them all imaginable Encouragements to go forward in Well-doing, "to add to their Faith Vertue", and to become as good and excellent, as 'tis possible for them to be upon Earth, that they may be

be the better qualified to go to Heaven ; and whilst she allows of this Liberty, proposes Truths, exhorts Men to become Holy and without Rebuke ; what Hurt can there be in that Authority, or the Exercise of it, which decrees our Rites and Ceremonies, appoints the Decency of our publick Worship, and consults the Honour of God, and the Promotion of Religion in all her Publick Offices and Administrations? If the Members of those Churches that dissent from us, can without Murmuring, yield and submit to their Rites, why must the Murmuring lye at our Door? Why cannot we submit more heartily to be govern'd by our Church, and observe with greater Strictness her Rules and Methods, that we may be train'd up for Heaven in her way, and may be improv'd by her Advice and Counsels? Is there not Reason, that we who are undoubtedly Part of the Catholick Church, should give more Heed to her Commands, and yield a more chearful Obedience to her, than those who are divided from us do, or can to their pretended Fraternities? Could we be but persuaded to live in her Communion, as she hath appointed, we should consult both our Safety here, and our Happiness hereafter ; and what by joining in her Devotions, and following of her Advice, might get ready to be join'd to that Church above, which is without Blemish or Spot. Let me therefore prevail with you to put in Practice what she teaches, to conform to her Rules, to be as diligent as she exhorts ; that ye may be found to her Praise in the Great Day, as your Lord designs : *That he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having Spot, nor wrinkle, or any such thing ; but that it should be Holy, and without Blemish.*

Ephes. 5. 27.

ARTICLE XXI.

ACTS XV. 6.

**And the Apostles and Elders came together, for
to consider of this Matter.**

AS Civil Affairs are sometimes so weighty, as to require the Advice of a National Assembly; Ecclesiastical are frequently made so perplex'd and intricate, as to stand in need of the Truth Bishops and Pastors Deliberation and Counsel; that the of the Gospel may be maintain'd, the Peace of the Church secur'd, and the Purity of Christianity continued to Posterity. Such wise Determinations are so necessary, that no sooner was the Gospel publish'd amongst the *Gentiles*, but it was thought requisite, for the Apostles and Elders to meet and consult about the Necessity of Circumcision. For certain Men came down from *Judea*, and taught the Brethren, that except they were circumcis'd, they could not be sav'd. Whereupon, **the Apostles and Elders came together, for to consider of this Matter**: And upon mature Deliberation determin'd against Circumcision.

Which shows the Reasonableness of the Twenty First Article of our Church. 'General Councils may not be gather'd together without the Command and Will of Princes: And when these be gather'd together (forasmuch as they be an Assembly of Men, whereof all be not govern'd with the Spirit and Word of God) they may err, and sometimes have erred, even in Things pertaining unto God. Wherefore Things ordained by them as necessary to Salvation, have neither Strength nor Authority; unless it may be declar'd that they be taken out of Holy Scripture'. Upon which consider,

- I. The Prince's Power in summoning and gathering General Councils: They may not be gather'd together without the Commandment and Will of Princes.
- II. The Fallibility of them when gathered: Forasmuch as they be an Assembly of Men, whereof all be not govern'd by the Spirit and Word of God, they may err, and sometimes have err'd, even in Things pertaining to God.
- III. The Invalidity of their Determinations, when the Scripture is not for them: Wherefore Things ordain'd by them, as necessary to Salvation, have neither Strength, nor Authority; unless it be declar'd, that they be taken out of Holy Scripture.

I. The Princes of the Earth have Power to summon and gather General Councils, or the Bishops and Presbyters of the Christian Church, to consider of the weighty Concerns of it. A General Council is a Congregation of Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons, from all Parts of the Christian World, to advise about Matters of Religion, that are controverted or overgrown with Errors, to deliberate for the Conservation of the Truth, and Unity of the Faith, and to determine for the Safety and Preservation of the Flock of Christ. Such an Assembly as this our Church declares, in Opposition to *Rome*, may not be summon'd and gathered together, without the Consent, Authority, and Command of the several Princes of the Earth: For they are the Supreme Governors of their respective Dominions; and 'tis fit there should be no Suspicion of any ill Design given them, by such a vast Confluence of People.

1. The Consent of Princes must be obtain'd for the Liberty of such an Assembly; for they are the Supreme Governors of their respective Dominions, and must not be provok'd by any Concourse of People of other Nations and Languages: Besides, they are appointed, if Christians, to be Nursing Fathers of the Church. And therefore in Concerns of that vast Importance, 'tis fit that they should have the Direction, as well to satisfy or remove the Scruples of their respective Subjects, as to lay a Foundation of Christian Peace thro' the whole World: Thus "*Asa* gather'd all *Judab*, and *Benjamin*, and the Strangers with them, out of *Ephraim* and *Manasses*, and *Simeon*, and made a Covenant to seek the Lord God of their Fathers". Thus *Hezekiah* gathered the Priests and *Levites*, and put them upon reforming the Abuses of the Divine Worship: *Josiah* also made use of this Authority in summoning (as I may call it) a Council "of the Wise Men of his Nation, to renew the Covenant of the Lord". And the same Power, which the Kings of *Israel* and *Judab* had, in gathering the Governors of the Church, advising about Means to restore or reform it, Christian Princes possess in their several Dominions; and their Leave must be obtain'd, their Summons must be issued out, and their Protection must be given to all that meet in their Dominions, to consider and determine for the Welfare of Christianity. We are taught, for this and other Reasons, to pray for Kings, and all that are in Authority under them; *That we may lead a quiet and peaceable Life, in all Godliness and Honesty*.

² Chron. 15.94

² Chron. 34.29.

¹ Tim. 2. 21

2. It is fit that Princes should have the Direction of General Councils, that there may be no Umbrage or Suspicion given by such a vast Confluence of People of all Nations, in any of their Dominions; for when they are acquainted with the Occasion, approve of the Design, consent to the Proposal, and promise their Protection and Support to all concern'd in it; they cannot entertain any Jealousy, that some Conspiracy is carrying on, which may be detrimental to their Interest, or hazardous to their Powers or Government. For this

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1 Pet. 2. 13.

this Reason were a General Council to be conven'd in the Dominions of a Prince of another Religion, I make no doubt but the Persons concern'd, would petition for Leave and Safe Conduct, that there might be no Jealousies entertain'd concerning the Design of such Meetings, in Prejudice to Christianity. For as we are bound to submit to the Civil Powers of the World, we must give them no Occasion for Misunderstanding. St. Peter's Rule should be observ'd by Christians under any lawful Government; *Submit your selves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the King as Supreme.*

II. General Councils, when gather'd, are but fallible. They may be prudential Means for the Security of the Faith, and Peace of the Church; but after all, are fallible, and liable to mistake, to over-shoot themselves, and to act as Men; they may err, and have erred. For such Assemblies are compos'd of Men, some of which are not guided by the Spirit or the Word of God.

1. General Councils may err, or mistake in that which they convene to determine. For since the Apostles Days, we have no Assurance given, that they are under the Direction of an infallible Spirit: "They indeed spake as they were mov'd by the Holy Ghost", and could not mistake the Point. But since their Decease, Men are left to the ordinary Assistances of Grace, and their own Judgments and Inclinations; and what by the Prevalency of Interest, and the Fondness they have for some Opinions; what by the Desire to please those that employ them, or the Predominancy of Passion, it falls out often, that they bring their Infirmities with them to Councils, and discover that they are but Men: Nay, when they are left to the common Rules of Discretion and Wisdom, which may be over-balance'd by Faction, or politick Designs, they may be but stately Tools for a Party, and the whole Assembly may be but a pack'd Congregation, set at Work to carry on Schism, to encourage Error, and to recommend the most palpable Heresies, that ever were extant in the World. Unless therefore Men were secure from common Frailties, Passions, and Interests, there is a possibility left for General Councils to mistake, and err from the Truth: And such an Assembly may be but the Council of the Ungodly, which good Men, as they expect a Blessing, should shun. *Blessed is the Man, that walketh not in the Council of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of Sinners, nor sitteth in the Seat of the scornful.*

Psal. 1. 1.

2. As such Councils may err, they have shown in Fact that they can, and have erred, and determined contrary to the Word of God. The Jews by a National Council, in which the High-Priest presided, sought how to ensnare and destroy Jesus; and at last condemned and deliver'd him to Pontius Pilate to be crucified: After this, by the Determination of the same Sanhedrim or Council, they caus'd the Apostles to be beaten, and commanded them, that they should preach no more in the Name of Jesus. In following Times, the General Councils

Councils of Christians betrayed their Mistakes; they decry'd the Divinity of our Lord, and established *Arianism*. In the last Ages, the Worship of Images was established, the Belief of Transubstantiation, and other Popish Errors was decreed, and an Anathema pronounc'd against those that refus'd to admit them. These Instances are palpable Proofs, that General Councils have erred, and have engaged their Authority in commanding that which is erroneous, and corrupting the true Religion. And as plain Fact is evidence against them, our Church had Reason to declare that they have erred. *And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all, nor teach in the Name of Jesus.*

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Act. 4. 18.

III. The Reason is added why they are thus apt to be mistaken. They are but Men at best, are not always guided by the Spirit and Word of God.

1. General Councils are made up of Men which are short-sighted, and liable to judge amiss, who perhaps go up to the Council with the Prepossessions of Interest, and Prejudice of a Party, as the *Arian* Bishops went to their Assembly; and as the *Italian* Bishops, that were sent to assist in the Council of *Trent*, who are reported to have received Directions constantly from *Rome*, and were always ready to give the casting Voice, according as might serve or promote the Papal Grandeur. And as they discover'd the Weakness of Humane Nature; others, in succeeding Generations, may do the same upon the like Occasion; or what was done then, may come to pass afterwards, whenever a General Council is thought necessary: For the most prevailing and powerful may resolve before-hand what to do, and procure Creatures of their own to defend, maintain, and decree the same. Men are too apt to hearken to Greatness, and to yield to the Directions of those, who are concerned for the Support of Errors: They seldom look farther than their own Advantage, and have a Vote for Interest, ready to serve a Turn, and to ingratiate with rising Powers. To prevent such Inconveniences, *St. Paul's* Resolutions are to be taken, when he says, *For do I now persuade Men or God? or do I seek to please Men? for if I yet pleased Men, I should not be the Servant of Christ.*

Gal. 1. 10.

2. No wonder they are frequently betray'd by Weakness, and byass'd by Interest; for all of the Assembly are not guided by the Spirit and Word of God. Generally it so falls out, that some are more influenced by private Fancies, than the Spirit: Whereas could we be certain, that every one was guided by the Spirit and the Word, such Councils might be depended upon, and their Authority might be more steddily obeyed; but because it so happens, that in such a vast Concourse of Men, some are not influenc'd by the Spirit, nor do they take the Word for their Rule; the Credit of such Councils must abate, and their Decrees may not compare with the Apostolical Canon. Not so much as the Council of *Nice* was made up of infallible Men, though the miraculous Gifts had not been with-

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withdrawn for many Years, and many of the Bishops there present had been Prisoners for the Sake of Jesus, and had been Confessors in the Face of Danger; yet if it had not been for *Papbmutius*, they were in Danger of Erring, in the Case of the Marriage of the Clergy. And if that Council, made up of such excellent Pastors, who had been try'd in the Furnace of Affliction, was in such apparent Danger of mistaking; we may suspect any other that can be conven'd in following Ages. For all that profess Religion are not sincere; some will dissemble with God and Man; and their Voices can be but of little Worth; and their Word may not be taken in a General Council. We should join our Prayers in such a Case; *That we may be deliver'd from unreasonable and wicked Men: For all Men have not Faith.*

2 Theff. 3. 2.

3. Their Determinations are invalid, when the Scripture is against them: Or all their Decrees and Canons are of no Strength or Force, when the Word of God declares the contrary. Wou'd they speak for Christ, and warrant what they determine, by his express Will; they must be acknowledg'd excellent Expedients for the Composing of Differences, securing Unity, and maintaining the Church's Peace. And they were ever conven'd for these Purposes, and have been of great Use in most Ages, as may be seen by the Historical Account that is given of them; and though it is pretended, that they have done Mischief, and establish'd Error as by a Law, as must be confess'd, when Faction hath had the Precedency in them; and so all Civil Assemblies are as liable to such Heats and Contentions as Ecclesiastical: Yet when they have met with a good Temper, pursued Truth and Peace with Sincerity, they have been very proper to compose the World, and have been, and will be, of great Service to Christianity; as we are directed, *Follow Peace with all Men, and Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord.*

Heb. 12. 14.

By this Article we may learn, what the Presumption of *Rome* is, against which our Church determines; how fit it is that we should understand the Errors of her General Councils; And how proper it is for you to fix upon your Minds the Care which our Church takes, that ye may not be in Bondage to Councils; which is a farther Obligation upon us to vindicate her from Contempt.

1. As our Church determines against the Presumption of *Rome* in this Article; it is but fit that we should consider it: For that pretends to Infallibility, and tells you it cannot be mistaken. Our Church assures you, that her Councils are fallible, and not wholly to be trusted: Nay, as *Rome* challenges the Power to summon Councils, to appoint their Time and Place of Meeting, and to preside over them; our Church being sensible of these Encroachments, and detesting the Pride and Vanity of *Roman* Power, declares that such Councils may not be gather'd together without the Command of Princes; that the Pope hath no more Power to summon Councils, than any other Bishop; that as *Constantine* summon'd the Council of *Nice*; *Theodosius*, that of *Constantinople*; *Theodosius* the Younger, that of *Ephe-*
sus;

sus; and *Marcian*, that of *Chalcedon*: So all other Princes have the Power to assemble any other Councils; and that the *Roman Church* is injurious to Princes, when she undertakes that which is a Part of their Prerogative. But we need not admire that she thus usurps the Power of Princes, when she hath encourag'd Treasons, put forward Conspiracies, and canoniz'd the Traytors. So long as the Temporal Power does not hinder the Spiritual, so long they are Friends to it; but when once it opposes them, they can restrain the Temporal by any Means which are thought necessary. The Pope can change Kingdoms, take from one, and give to another, if it be necessary for the good of Souls; can enact or can abrogate Laws for the same End, as *Bellarmino* determines. And because it was objected, that the Primitive Bishops exercis'd no such Power; he says, That the Reason why they did not depose *Nero*, *Diocletian*, and *Julian* the Apostate, was, because they had not Power and Strength enough to do it. So that there is the Original of all Treasons and Conspiracies; and those amongst our selves, that entertain treasonable Principles, receiv'd them at first from Popish Hands, and act but the Part, in other Dresses, of Jesuits and Emissaries. For our Religion allows Kings their Authority, and commands us to be subject; declaring, *Whosoever resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God; and they that resist, shall receive to themselves Damnation.* Rom. 13. 2.

2. It is also reasonable for you to know the Errors of General Councils, that you may not be impos'd upon by great Names, or drawn from your Excellent Faith by Number and Voices. For what is a General Council to us, whether that of *Lateran*, or *Trent*, if it determines against God's Word? They are but Men, and fallible, designing Men. And if they vote for Error, we may not regard them; for it is the Word of God which is our Rule, the Christian Law, and the Prophets that we appeal to. And if General Councils recede from them, be it to themselves; we are no way obliged to yield Obedience to them; they must answer for themselves, and we must answer for our selves; and 'tis not their Decree that will save us harmless, when the Word of God is expressly against us, and condemns us. *Stand fast therefore in the Liberty, wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the Yoke of Bondage; nor yield to Councils when against Christ.* Gal. 5. 1.

3. It is requisite for you to consider the Care our Church takes, that ye may not be ensnar'd by the Authority of Councils, and the great Veneration she always discovers for, and pays to the Holy Scriptures. She prefers one Sentence of Scripture before the big Words and high Rants of Councils; and discovers upon every Occasion how willing she is, that the Word of God should be the Rule of Faith, and Guide of Conscience. If Bishops, assembled in Council, show themselves prudent and pious, and give the Preference to the Word of God in all their Determinations, and consult, as much as may be, the Tranquillity and Peace of the Church; she approves of their Decrees, allows of them as the discreet Suffrages of Faithful Pastors.

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Rom. 8. 16.

stors. But whenever it is visible, that Faction and Interest conspire, and vote against the Truth, she leaves them, and shews, that she values not their Sanctions, but stands by the Word of God, in defiance to any other Spiritual Power. And this to her own Children, ought to be a farther Obligation upon them, to love her Interest, to promote it, as it lies in their Power; and as she deserves their Commendation, this should engage them effectually to vindicate her Honour and Praise, which Popery or Fanaticism cast Contempt upon, and despise with Scorn. We must think meanly of Religion, if we can endure that such an excellent Pillar of Truth shou'd be slighted; and forget our Communion with her, when we can patiently hear her Enemies Revilings, and entertain Jealousies against her: Let us rather value her Advice, live up to her Exhortations, walk as by the Word she teaches, that we may be her genuine Children, and thereby the Children of God. *The Spirit it self beareth witness with our Spirits, that we are the Children of God.*

ARTICLE

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2 TIM. II. First Part of the 21st Verse.

If a Man purge himself from these, he shall be a Vessel unto Honour.

IN this Militant State, in which every one of us are oblig'd to work out our Salvation, we must endeavour to purify our selves more and more from all Filthiness of Flesh and Spirit; that when we come to dye, we may be presented acceptable in the Blood of Jesus. For, **If a Man purge himself from these, he shall be a Vessel unto Honour**, and need not the Assistance of a purifying Fire, to prepare him for Glory.

Which may direct us to the Twenty Second Article, which says, "The *Romish* Doctrine concerning Purgatory, Pardons, Worshipping and Adoration, as well of Images as of Relicks, and also Invocation of Saints, is a fond Thing, vainly invented, and grounded upon no Warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God". In this we may perceive, what Opinion our Church hath of Purgatory, Pardons, Worshipping of Images, Relicks, and Invocation of Saints. Every one of them is called Fond, vainly Invented, and grounded upon no Warrant of Scripture. I shall therefore justify our Church's Censure of them, as I call them over again, in their Order.

I. Purgatory is a fond Invention, not fit to be seriously regarded: For it is fancied to be a fiery Furnace, capable of receiving a vast Number of Souls, in which they are to be purg'd and cleans'd for a certain Time in the Flames of it: And then they are to be allow'd a free Passage into the Eternal Heavens. In sure and certain Belief of this, the Papists pray for the Souls of their deceased Friends, and hope that by their Importunity they are either deliver'd from, or, at least, eas'd in their Torments. This Fancy our Church calls Fond and Foolish, or Vain and Unprofitable: For if these Souls, which are suppos'd to go thither, are in some Measure Pious, to what Purpose are they sent thither; for they are then sanctify'd; and if sanctify'd, they are justify'd, and freed from Condemnation. And as they are forgiven in the Blood of Jesus, nothing can be laid to their Charge; unless a Christian can be forgiven and punish'd for the same Crimes. St. Paul shews you, how fond and ridiculous this is, when he says, *There is therefore now no Condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit.* Rom. 8. 1.

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Heb. 3. 7, 8.

2. Purgatory is vainly invented, or set forth to no good Purpose; for thereby those that live and dye in Sin, are put in Hopes of being purify'd after Death; and in Expectation of this, they presume so much upon the Divine Goodness, till they awake in Hell, and are put beyond Recovery. Besides, it is no other than a vain Invention, which hath no Support from Reason or Revelation; for our own Reason will tell us, that this must be the Time to prepare for the State after Death: And Revelation assures us, That such Fancies do but harden the Heart. *As the Holy Ghost saith, To Day if ye will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts.*

Heb. 9. 14.

3. Purgatory hath no Warrant from Scripture; for we cannot find one clear and plain Word to establish it upon. We read, that "we shall be sav'd, so as by Fire", with great Difficulty, as when Men escape burning. And we are inform'd, that our Lord "shall come in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance upon those that know not God, and obey not the Gospel". We are assur'd also there is a Fire in Hell, which cannot be extinguish'd or put out. But as for this purging Fire, which is to cleanse the Souls of Men after Death, we read not one word of it: But on the contrary, are instructed to trust in the Blood of Jesus, as alone able to purify the Soul. *How much more shall the Blood of Jesus purge your Conscience from dead Works, to serve the Living God!*

Heb. 10. 14.

4. This Purgatory is rather repugnant to the Word of God, or contrary to it. For that represents this Life to be the Time for Purification; "Every one that hath this Hope in him, purifieth himself": This present Day to be the Day of Salvation; "Behold this is the accepted Time, behold this is the Day of Salvation": And the same Word tells us, that "without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord; and that every one in his own Body shall answer at the Day of Judgment, for what was done in the Flesh; and that every one shall then receive, according to that which he hath done in the Flesh, whether it be good, or whether it be evil". And therefore Purgatory is repugnant to the Word of God, and there can be no Pardon obtain'd by enduring the Flames of it; for it is by Christ that we must be sav'd. *Who by one Offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*

Act. 2. 38.

II. The next fond Things are Pardons or Indulgences, which are promis'd to those that visit such a Saint or Chapel, or say so many Prayers to the Virgin Mary. Our Church cannot endure that ye should be gulled with such silly Fancies; and calls these,

1. Fond, Silly, Trifling, and not worthy of Regard. For as Purgatory is a meer Invention, those Pardons which are granted for the Ease or Relief of Souls in Purgatory, must be of the same Nature: For as there is no such purging Fire, the Pardons must be no less than counterfeit. For indeed there is no Forgiveness, but by Faith in Christ, and true Repentance; and the Promise of that is given us upon our Baptism. *Repent and be baptiz'd for the Remission of Sins.*

2. These Indulgences were vainly invented, set up, and promis'd upon no Reason, that a Christian may rely upon. For admitting that the Pope engages, that whoever repeats so many Prayers in such a Place, shall deliver one or more Souls out of Purgatory; What Ground hath he for it? Or why may we believe him, more than another Man? For he promises that which he hath no Power to give. 'Tis a vain Invention to get Money, to enrich himself, or to carry on his own Designs, as he did to carry on the Holy War. *In vain do they worship me, teaching for Doctrines the Traditions of Men.* Matt. 15. 9.

3. These Pardons have no Warrant from Scripture: For we read of no Pardons to be had there, but for those that are alive upon Earth in the Way to Eternity; for those who truly repent, and believe in Jesus, behaving themselves according to his Gospel. But as for the Dead, they are under no Capacity of altering their State: If in Time of Life they obtain'd their Pardon, 'tis well for them; if not, "as the Tree falls, so it lies; and as Death left them, Judgment shall find them; and there is no Wisdom, or Contrivance in the Grave", which may relieve them. Their surviving Friends may pity them, and be too credulous in their Behalf, may purchase Masses, and do their best (as they think) to relieve them; but all in vain, for as they died, they must come forth to Judgment. *And shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the Resurrection of Life, and they that have done evil, unto the Resurrection of Damnation.* Joh. 5. 29.

4. These Pardons are rather repugnant to the Word of God: For that declares, that this is the Time to go to Jesus, for Pardon and Rest: "Come unto me now, whilst it is call'd to Day, and I will give you rest". So that it is now or never that our Pardon is to be secur'd and seal'd to us; and that Word further assures us, that there can be no Pardon, but according to the Terms of his Gospel. So that if Men might repent, believe, and obey in the other State, there might be a Possibility of gaining their Pardon; but since there is no such Alteration to be made in the Grave, in vain such Pardons are recommended to poor Sinners, who had much better repent and amend in this Life, than run such vast Hazards upon a mere Figment and Imagination: For, *Neither is there Salvation in any other, for there is none other Name under Heaven given amongst Men (but that of Jesus Christ) whereby we must be saved.* Act. 4. 12.

III. The third fond Thing which our Church warns you against, is, the Worshipping of Images, and Relicks, the Likeness of God, his Son, or a Saint; and the Teeth, Nails, Hair, or Garments, suppos'd to have been the Saints; for such Things are called Relicks.

1. These are fond and silly Conceits, not worthy of your Regard: For is it not a vain Undertaking, to take a Piece of Wood, and bring it into the Shape of a Man; and then to burn the Chips, and worship the Remainder? Or is it not silly, to take a little Paint, and with one Part to colour a Sign-Post, and with the other to draw the Face of a Saint, and then to fall down and adore it? Our

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Isa. 44. 16, 17.

own Reason scorns such Trifling : For one Part of the Wood, or Paint, is no more to be worshipped than another ; and 'tis not the Name of a Saint, that can make it otherwise. *Isaiab* expos'd this Fondness, in his Time. *He burneth Part thereof in the Fire ; he roseth Rost, and the Residue thereof he maketh a God, even his graven Image. He falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it ; and prayeth to it, and saith, Deliver me ; for thou art my God.*

Matt. 4. 10.

2. Images were vainly invented for Divine Service ; for we may worship God very well without them : We may adore him as a Spirit ; serve him in Truth, according to his Greatness, without lessening his Majesty, and appointing Wood or Stone to be his Representatives, or to share in his Adorations : He will not allow, that his Glory should be given to another, or his Honour to graven Images. And as it is below his Immense Essence, to be set forth in the mean Figures of Wood or Stone ; it is an Abuse of his Worship and Presence, to allow such Trifles to vye with him in his Service, or to share in any Adorations : For *thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.*

1 Joh. 5. 21.

3. Such Images are not grounded upon any Warrant of Scripture ; for that Holy Book is against Image-Worship, from the Beginning to the End. 'Tis true, God did command, that the Figures of Cherubims should be made to cover the Ark with their Wings ; but no where allows, that they, or any other should be worshipped. What tho' Diseases were cured by Handkerchiefs taken from St. Paul's Body ? It is not said, that for that Reason they may be had in Veneration, or worshipped. We stretch Scripture too far, if we think we may worship that, which was made use of in working a Miracle ; for then the Clay and Spittle, which open'd the Eyes of the Blind, might be ador'd. The Command is as express, as Words can make it : "Thou shalt not make to thy self any graven Image : Thou shalt not fall down, and worship it". And whoever, under the Pretence of Honouring God, will, after this, presume to make, and worship an Image, cannot defend himself by the Word of God. *Little Children, keep your selves from Idols.*

1 Cor. 10. 7, 14.

4. The Worship of Images, is rather repugnant to the Word of God, or rather done in plain Defiance to it. The Second Commandment, just mention'd, is plain. "Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them". And because this Commandment is so clearly against it, some Roman Catechisms have it not ; for it speaks too plainly against their Practice : And the Priests do not think fit, that the People should know, that God has forbid that very Image-Worship, which they commend. As for Relicks, the Scripture informs us, that the Body of *Moses* was hid, that the *Israelites* should make no Relicks of it, as is presum'd, considering the Proneness of that People to Idolatry. Under the Gospel, we are as much engag'd against Idolatry, as ever. *Neither be ye Idolaters, as were some of them. Dearly beloved, flee from Idolatry.*

IV. The last fond Thing, which our Church blames in Rome, is the Invocation of Saints ; or, the making our Prayers and Supplications to them.

1. Our Church looks upon this as a fond, and unprofitable Service. For what can be more vain, than to call upon those as Saints, which we are not sure are in Heaven ? Or if we chuse out those, that we have Reason to think are there ; what can be more idle, than to call upon those, which we are not sure can hear us ? Or if they might hear us ; what can be more impertinent, than to call upon those, who may not have the Power to help us ? But is it not most vain, to call upon such, and to neglect to call upon God himself ; who has commanded us to Pray, promis'd to hear us, when we pray to him in his Son's Name ; and engag'd to fulfil our Desires ; who alone has Power to hear us all, to answer all Petitions, and to send us Help from above ? Is it not unreasonable, to call upon the Servant, when God himself invites us, to come and pray to himself ? *Call upon me in the Day of Trouble ; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.* Psal. 50. 15.

2. This Invocation of Saints was vainly invented, and allow'd in Practice. For to what Purpose should we pray to the Servants, when we have Liberty to speak to the Master of the House ? Or for what Reason should we Petition the Saints, when we may go directly to God ? I confess, the Names of Martyrs and Confessors were commemorated at the Altar ; but there is a vast Difference between a plain Commemoration, and Adoration. We may make mention of the Names of Saints with Honour, whilst we abhor to worship them. I may admit too, that those that are Saints in the Church Triumphant, may pity us in the Church Militant, and wish well to us : But we may not worship them, or call upon them as present ; for they are in Heaven, too far to hear ; and we are upon Earth, at too great a Distance to make them hear. *Doubtless thou art our Father, tho' Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel (or Jacob) acknowledge us not. Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer ; thy Name is from everlasting.* Isa. 63. 16.

3. This Practice of Calling upon Saints, is grounded upon no Warrant of Scripture : For where is it written, that Saints may be pray'd unto ? Or that any good Men call'd upon those that were dead, to help them ? Did David ever call upon Abraham, to help him ; or upon Isaac, to befriend him ? Or did Daniel ever call upon any of the dead Prophets, to relieve him ? 'Tis true, we are to pray for one another in the way, and to help forward one another's Salvation, by mutual Supplications. But when we are remov'd from hence, the Case is alter'd : The best may not be call'd upon, or petition'd. We know not their State ; neither may we break in upon their Retirements. We can have no Encouragement to offer up any Petition, or to depend upon them for the Performance. 'Tis only to God we must pray, and then if we ask we shall receive. *For every one that asketh, receiveth, and he that seeketh, findeth, and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.* Mat. 7. 8.

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4. Such Invocation of Saints is rather repugnant to Scripture. For if we will in this Case be guided by God's Word, we have Reason to think, that the best of Saints may not be in any Capacity to hear, answer, or to assist us; for they are but Spirits, whose Understandings are finite, and limited, and bounded, and who are not capable of hearing Complaints from Ten Thousand Petitioners and Places, at one and the same Time, and cannot answer the Expectations of all; 'tis the Prerogative of God to be present every where, and to be Omnipotent. As therefore *Abraham* is represented as ignorant of us, we may by the same Rule believe, that the rest are as ignorant, and as unlikely to help us, and that it is safest for all to pray to God alone in the Name of his Son, and to trust to him for an Answer or Blessing. *David* is not ascended into Heaven: And if not there, 'tis imprudent to pray to him, or any other.

From this Care of our Church to shew you the fond and dangerous Practices of Popery, I must appeal to you whether she can be leaning that Way; and whether she is not fit to be trusted with your Souls.

1. Ye see with what Care our Church discovers the fond and dangerous Practices of *Rome*, how sincerely she sets before you the plain Matters of Fact, and how uprightly she condemns them as repugnant to the Holy Scriptures: After this honest Dealing, can she be represented as warping towards *Rome*, or as hastening to Popery? Does she in any Respect return to the Errors she hath renounc'd, or approve of that she fairly warns you against? Or can it be imagin'd, that whilst she declares her Mind so clearly against these Errors, she privately retains a good Inclination towards them, and wants only an Opportunity to profess them? When can it be thought that a Church is in Earnest, if ours is not clear and unfeigned in these Points? Are not our Articles her Declaration? Do we not openly profess, that we acknowledge this to be her genuine and real Sense? And after all, must she be suspected as inclin'd to *Rome*, and favouring that dangerous Church? As we have cast off all that was bad and dangerous in that Church, I hope we may retain the Bible, which they handed to us, without partaking of their Sins; and govern our selves by it, without incurring the Suspicion of being inclin'd that Way. And as the Word of God will justify us, we think we are in Sobriety farther from Popery than those that accuse us. *These are Murmurers, Complainers, walking after their own Lusts, and their Mouth speaketh great swelling Words, having Men's Persons in Admiration because of Advantage.*

Jude v. 16.

2. Ye may see how worthy our Church is to be trusted with your Souls, and with what Reason she may challenge your Respect and Affection; for she does not frighten you with Purgatory, but with Hell-Fire: She promises no Pardon, but in the Blood of Christ,

Christ, upon your Faith and Repentance. She directs you to worship God, and deters you from all Images and Pictures : She teaches you to be Saints and to call upon God alone for Mercy and Acceptance ; and as she thus speaks the Truth in Jesus, she deserves your Love, may look for your Assistance, and may depend upon her genuine Sons for Support and Peace. *Remember ye the Words which were spoken before of the Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ ; how that they told you there should be Mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly Lusts.*

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ARTICLE XXIII.

JEREM. XIV. First Part of the 14th Ver.

**Then the Lord said unto me, the Prophets
Prophecy lies in my Name; I sent them not,
neither have I commanded them, neither
spake I unto them.**

THERE were some amongst the *Jews*, that look'd upon themselves as gifted Brethren, able to instruct others, to receive and to deliver the Word of the Lord; and in all likelihood they were such as were brought up in the Schools of the Prophets, and had been as much prepar'd for Illuminations and Prophecy, as those that were called to it; who nevertheless took upon them that Office without a Mission, and pretended to speak in the Name of the Lord, when he had not sent them: And therefore God complains of them by *Jeremiah*, and rejects their Ministry. **Then the Lord said unto me, the Prophets Prophecy lies in my Name; I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake I unto them.**

Which shews the Force of the Twenty Third Article, which says,
 "It is not lawful for any Man to take upon him the Office of publick Preaching, or ministring the Sacraments in the Congregation, before he be lawfully called, and sent to execute the same. And those we ought to judge lawfully call'd and sent, which be chosen and called to this Work by Men, who have publick Authority given unto them in the Congregation, to call and send Ministers into the Lord's Vineyard. For whoever undertakes to preach without a Mission, acts the Part of a false Prophet, the Lord sent them not, neither commanded them. Let us Consider,

- I. That there is a lawful Call, or sending to the Office of Preaching, and Administring the Sacraments.
- II. It is not lawful for any Man to take upon him this Office, before he is lawfully call'd or sent.
- III. Those are to be judg'd as lawfully call'd and sent, which are chosen into the Office by Men, who have publick Authority given them in the Congregation, to call and send Ministers into the Lord's Vineyard.

I. There

I. There is a lawful Call to the Office of Preaching, and Administering the Sacraments. For God hath not left it to the Conceit, or humourfome Fancy of Men to separate themselves for this great Work: For then every one that thought himself qualified for the Ministry, would be lawfully called; and the hottest Heads and boldest Spirits would intrude and thrust themselves upon the Sacred Function: And thus there might be as many Preachers, as there are conceited Zealots, and as many different Congregations as Teachers; and all manner of Confusion and Disorder, under the specious Pretence of Zeal for God, would be brought into the Church: And as he hath not left it to the private Impulse of Conceit to separate for the Ministry, so he hath not authorized the People to separate any for that Purpose, or left it to the humour of Men and Women to appoint and constitute their own Pastors. When the Congregation of the Jews was in a Tumult, and valued it self for being Holy, he gave no Encouragement to *Corah, Dathan, or Abiram*; but punish'd them severely for their Offence. And when he reveal'd Christianity by his Son, he gave no Authority to the People to chuse the Apostles, to separate Evangelists, or to send the Ministry. Under the old Law none were allow'd to take this Office upon them, but those that were called of God, as was *Aaron*. And when our Saviour came into the World, "he glorified not himself to be made an High-Priest; but He called him, who said, Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee: Thou art a Priest for ever after the Order of *Melchisedech*". The Apostles that were appointed to publish the Gospel over the World, did not thrust themselves upon that Office, but were called by our Lord, and sent out by him for the Work of the Ministry: And to shew that none were allow'd to run upon that Sacred Employment, without his Order, he was pleas'd to appear to *St. Paul*, and to send him in an astonishing Manner. The lawful Call therefore must be the same, which God hath appointed and established, and which is not to be disus'd or overrul'd by the Humour or Authority of Man. After the Ascension of our Lord, the Apostles set Bishops and Presbyters apart for this Work, and sent them to preach, and administer the Sacraments, as Christ had sent themselves: And after the Decease of the Apostles, the Bishops ordain'd by them, set others apart to succeed themselves. And thus the Ministry lawfully call'd, hath continued in the Church to this Day; and may the same continue to the End of the World. *St. Paul* gives us an Account of his Practice, which was not different from the rest of the Apostles. *For this cause left I thee (Titus) Tit. 1. 5. in Crete, that thou shouldest set in Order the Things that are wanting, and ordain Elders in every City, as I had appointed thee.*

II. It is not lawful for any Man to take upon him this Office, before he be lawfully call'd, and sent to execute the same: For Men are not born Teachers, neither is it in the Power of any Company of Christians, to separate whom they think fit for the Purpose.

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meer natural Parts were sufficient for it, then every one who fancies he hath Abilities for it, might take this Office upon him. What Confusion must this Liberty make amongst Christians, when one gifted Zealot cries out, here is Christ, and another calls as loud, that there is Christ, a third contradicts both these, and cries out of another Christ; and as many different Ways of Worship are recommended, as there are different Sentiments and Parties. To prevent this, there must be a lawful Call agreed upon; namely, to prevent Divisions and Schisms, and the Distraction and Confusion of honest well-meaning Christians. But what can this lawful Call be, but the same which God at first appointed? Can it be thought that there were no Men of Parts amongst the other Tribes of *Israel*, which were not appointed to officiate in the Sanctuary, or that all the Priests and *Levites* were gifted Men? Or may we not believe that many in *Israel* were found able for their Callings, understanding Men, and fit for Law or Camp, who never pretended to the Priesthood? And may we not think, that amongst the Priests and *Levites*, there were some that were not so quick-witted and sharp, as those of other Tribes? What then, might the *Israelites*, that were not Priests by Descent, usurp that Office, because they were more gifted, and could discharge it better than others? Or must the Priests turn Seculars, because they were not so well gifted? By no means, but the Appointment and Command of God was to be observ'd; his Order was to be followed, and the Priest was to officiate, and to attend at the Altar, because ordain'd by him, if he was not so sharp as others: And others were to attend to, and honour him in their Callings and Ministration, though more knowing than him. For the same Lord, that had separated the Family, and allotted their Station, was at Liberty to qualify Men as he pleas'd, and his Ordinance was to be strictly observ'd, let Men's Abilities and Parts be never so signal and extraordinary. What is found true amongst the *Israelites*, is also of Force amongst Christians; for though God hath not entail'd the Ministry upon a particular Family, yet he hath appointed, and set apart some to be Apostles, some Pastors, and Teachers: And it may happen that some that are called, may not have such strong and excellent Parts, as others may enjoy. What then? Shall the Ministry be slighted? And may others, who pretend to be more knowing, thrust themselves into their Room? May God's Way of sending Pastors be laid aside? And may others set up one of their own? By no Means, for it is not the Parts that make the Ministry, but the legal Separation of the Mission, the Authority and Power that is given from above. And when Men are lawfully call'd and sent, God is able to employ ordinary Parts in his own Way, to be Instruments in saving Souls, and to work Wonders; as was manifest in the Success of the Apostles Ministry, who were illiterate Men, and not able of themselves, by any Contrivance or Power of their own, to produce such a mighty Change upon the *Jewish* Nation, or the Heathen World. It can be no other than a Violation of God's Order, and an unlawful Intrusion into his Sanctuary, when Men take this Office upon them in a Way different from

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1 Cor. 12. 28
the first Part.
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from the Practice of the Apostolical Age, and Primitive Times. Whether this be done under the Pretence of better Parts and Gifts, or of the Choice and Applause of the People, the Intrusion is the same, and cannot be justified or warranted, either by God's Word, or the Practice of the best Times. For, *God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers: Are all Apostles? Are all Prophets? Are all Teachers?*

III. Those are to be judg'd as lawfully call'd and sent, which are chosen into the Office by Men, who have publick Authority given them in the Congregation, to chuse and send Ministers into the Lord's Vineyard; that is, who are called by Men, who succeed the Apostles, and had Authority given them to ordain others to carry on the Work of the Ministry. For though at first they were immediately called by God, and his Son Jesus, or by his Apostles divinely inspir'd: Yet because Miracles were not continued to the Church, such an immediate Choice was not always necessary; but the Power of chusing and ordaining, must needs fall into the Hands of those Men, who were lawfully sent by the Apostles, or their Successors. The true Meaning of being lawfully call'd by Men who have publick Authority given them in the Congregation, will fall into these plain Enquiries: Whether those that were sent by the Apostles, and were their undoubted Successors, were authoriz'd and deputed to send Ministers, or to ordain them for the Use of the Church? Or whether every particular Congregation hath Power to chuse their own Pastors? Or whether the Spirit of every Man is to be mov'd by the Spirit of God, to take upon him this Work, and that Impulse be sufficient? If the Spirit in our Days is to separate Men, then it must follow, that every one, who thinks he is mov'd by it, is to be a Minister; unless we can find a Difference (without the Help of a Miracle) to distinguish Presumption from a real Call, or the pretended Impulse of the Spirit, from that which is so in Earnest. And as to the Power in a Congregation to chuse and ordain their own Teachers, it was never known in the Primitive Times, or practis'd: Besides, it is so unreasonable to suppose a Congregation antecedent to a Pastor, or an House without a Builder, that in those early Times, we must offer Violence to our Reason to believe it: 'Tis true, the Church of Antioch did separate Barnabas and Saul, for the Work of the Ministry; but it was not the People, but the Governors of that Church, such as Simeon, Lucius, and Manaen, Prophets and Teachers divinely inspir'd, and able to send Labourers into the Vineyard; and those they sent were only put upon the Work they were engag'd in before by the Holy Ghost: And if any in our Days could be separated in that Manner, I should count them lawfully called. It remains then, that those only who were sent by the Apostles, or received Holy Orders from them, were authoriz'd, and had publick Authority given them, to separate Men for the Work of the Ministry, to lay Hands upon them, and by Supplications and Prayers to recommend them to the Grace of God. And as they are directed by

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St. Paul in his Epistle to *Timothy*, to chuse Men of such and such Qualifications ; they may and do separate those for the Ministry, that are most likely to prove serviceable for the Order, Edification, and Peace of the Church. And in this Primitive manner the Pastors of our Church are chosen, and set apart for the Work of the Ministry ; receiving their Ordination from those that originally receiv'd the Power from the Apostles and the Lord Jesus. *And he gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Ministry, for the Edifying of the Body of Christ.*

From this Explication of the Article ye may judge of the Pretenders to the Ministry ; consider the true Value that is to be put upon your own ; and conclude, that ye cannot encourage it better, than by conforming to the Directions of it.

1. Ye may now judge of the Pretenders to the Ministry, and of the Challenge they make to it ; for our Church assures you, 'tis not lawful for any Man to take upon him the Office of the Ministry, and that any may not Preach and Administer the Sacraments : Judge then who they are that usurp this Office, and do an unlawful Thing. Are they True Preachers, that plead they receive their Commission from the Spirit only, and are mov'd by the Holy Ghost ? Our Church says they are not : For those ought to be judged to be lawfully call'd and sent, who are chosen and called to this Work by Men ; whereas these Spiritual Teachers declare, they receive not their Power from Men, but immediately from God himself ; and thus they would open the Door to Enthusiasts, when our Church shuts it, and bolts it against them. Are those then true Ministers, which own they receive it from Men, from the Presbyters of the Church by Imposition of Hands, and of Prayer ? Our Church declares against these : For the Article says, they must be called to the Work by Men who have Publick Authority given them in the Congregation to call and send Ministers. This Congregation can be reputed no other than the Catholick Church ; and that has never given, or allowed, unto Presbyters alone, Power or Authority, to send Labourers into God's Vineyard ; nor can they produce any in the Apostles Times, or the First and Second Century, that were so Ordain'd ; for the Presbytery that Ordain'd *Timothy* was made up of an Apostle, and Apostolical Men. If therefore ye will hearken to our Church, such Ministry is not Lawful ; or according to the Apostolical Patterns. What, in the next Place, shall we think of that Ministry, which is chosen and ordain'd by the Body of the People ? When a Society of Men separate from our Church, club together for Communion in the Word and Ordinances ; and by a bold and daring Attempt, appoint whom they please to be their preaching Elder ; and laying Hands upon him appoint him to be their Minister. But who gave them this Power ? Whence have they this Authority ? Or how can they in Sobriety think, that God is pleas'd with such Usurpations : When, contrary to the Practice of the Apostles, and the Methods of the Primitive Times, they heap to themselves Teachers ? If this is Evangelical, any that dissent from the

the Catholick Church, *Arians, Socinians, Hereticks*, can never want Preachers, so long as they have the Confidence to chuse and separate the Gifted Men amongst them for that Purpose. Thus our Church disdains such a Ministry; and ye may see the Danger in attending to it; for as such have no Lawful and Evangelical Commission, their Instructions at the best, can be but the Advice of private Men; and how far that will bear them out in the great Day, it stands them in hand to consider; for the Spirit says expressly: *The time will come, when they will not endure sound Doctrine; but after their own Lusts shall they heape to themselves Teachers, having itching Ears; and they shall turn away their Ears from the Truth, and shall be turned unto Fables.*

2 Tim. 4. 3, 4.

2. Ye may without prejudice consider the true Value that is to be put upon your own Ministry; in an Age that is too apt to slight and despise them; to misrepresent them as crafty Cheats, and subtle Impostors; for they are in Truth sent by God, are ordain'd by those that he commissioned; they come with his Message, speak in his Name, and deliver that very Word, by which Men shall be judged at the last Day. And a Ministry so authoriz'd and employ'd, deserves to be heard, and ought to be in Estimation amongst us. 'Tis come to hard Terms, when we are forced thus to plead for our Character; and our Reputation must be low in the Opinion of some, when it is found necessary to speak thus plainly; but if it offends, we cannot help it; if it is a Fault, we must commit it; for it is fit we should know whose Messengers we are, and who has sent us; and as We will be to us if we preach not the Gospel, so We will be to them, who will not hearken or will not obey it. We speak not this for Advantage; nor court we your Commendation for private Ends: Provided ye will receive the Word with Meekness, as it is the Word of God, that ye will govern your Hearts and Lives by it, ye may (if ye can) despise our Persons, hearken to Reproaches, and joyn in disesteeming us: No matter how ye deal with us, so your Souls be but sanctify'd by the Word, purify'd by the Blood of Jesus, and saved in the Day of the Lord. But the more ye reverence your Saviour, value his Word, and esteem his Favour; the more will ye prize his Ministry for his sake, and regard us, who enjoy that Authority in Earthen Vessels, and are subject to the Infirmities of Men: For as our Lord suffers when we are ill us'd for his sake; and Religion lies neglected, when it is despis'd upon our Account; so the Ministry will partake of that Favour that is shown to our great Master. And as ye improve in Knowledge and real Piety, as ye grow in Vertue and Grace; it will have your Esteem, and that Assistance and Support, which unfeigned Zeal can discover towards it. He that despiseth Us, when We uprightly Minister before the Lord, despiseth in Effect him that sent us. But he that maintains the Dignity of the Ministry, in defiance of all pretending Teachers, appears in the Cause of Christ, and maintains that Authority he has given unto Men. But if, after all, we must submit to Calumnies and Reproaches, and must undergo Censures and Rebukes; we have this Consolation, that our Master was so us'd by an ungrateful World,

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25.

World, and enjoin'd us to be content. *The Disciple is not above his Master, nor the Servant above his Lord; it is enough for the Disciple to be as his Master, and the Servant as his Lord: If they have called the Master of the House Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of the Household.*

3. Ye cannot encourage the Ministers of Christ better, than by conforming to the Word which they preach, and living as that commands. We then value it in good Earnest, when we constantly endeavour to please God in Christ, as that exhorts, and do our best to be ready for Death and Judgment. 'Tis but a small Commendation, when ye are taken with the Composure of Words, and never show it in your Deeds, or are heated with Fancy, and never engage the Heart in Practice. Let it be your Care to practise what ye hear, and to demonstrate the Power of the Word, in the Reformation of your Lives: That ye may upon our Intreaty forsake your Sins, break off evil Habits, mortify your Lusts, improve in Piety, and grow better Men: Let the Sermons that ye approve, become Rules of Life, and what ye say ye value, improve your Morals; then ye will be the Praise of the Ministry, and in the Great Day we may rejoice together for ever. *Receive with Meekness the ingrafted Word, which is able to save your Souls.*

Jam. 1. 21,
the first Part.

ARTI

ARTICLE XXIV.

I COR. XIV. 9.

So likewise you, except ye utter by the Tongue Words easy to be understood, how shall it be known, what is spoken: for ye shall speak into the Air.

THE Use of Speech was given for Edification: And though God knoweth our Intentions, whether we speak to him or not, yet it is fit that we should understand what Petitions we make to him: And that every one that joins with us in Prayer, should join in the Sense of the Words, as well as the Postures of Devotion; that we may appear before him as rational Servants, and unite our Hearts and Voices in the same, *Amen*. **So likewise you, except ye utter by the Tongue Words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken: for ye shall speak into the Air:** As every one must be reputed to do, who prays in a Tongue which he does not understand, and says *Amen*, or, So be it, to that which he knows not, and cannot tell the meaning of.

Our Church declares against such unintelligible Supplications, saying in the Twenty Fourth Article: "It is a Thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God, and the Custom of the Primitive Church, to have Publick Prayers in the Church, or to minister the Sacraments, in a Tongue not understood of the People. For as for private Prayers, every one is at Liberty to pray in any Tongue which he understands, and God is ready to hear and answer: But for publick Devotions, 'tis fit they should be made in a Tongue, which all the People understand; that every one in the Congregation may consider what he asks, and join his Heart with the Supplication". Therefore,

- I. To pray in Publick, or to administer the Sacraments in an unknown Tongue, is repugnant to the Word of God.
- II. 'Tis repugnant and contrary to the Custom of the Primitive Church, or the Practice of the Apostles and their Successors.

I. To pray in an unknown Tongue in Publick, is plainly repugnant to the Word of God, or in direct Terms contrary to it. For according to Scripture, every Person that joins in Prayer, is oblig'd
to

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to understand what he petitions for, that he may not make a vain Oblation; and should join his Heart and Affections with his Prayer, that he may beg for Mercy as God commands. But what Understanding can there be, when the Words are but unusual Sounds in the Ears of the People; or what Affection can be discovered, when that which is petition'd for, is neither known to be good nor profitable, and the People have neither Understanding of, nor Affection for the Prayer, that is thus offer'd in a Tongue unknown? And nevertheless it must pass for their Prayer, and they are represented as using it, and calling upon God by it; that is, they pray when they know not that they do pray, and call upon God when they cannot tell what they call upon him for. But to shew you how plainly Scripture is against this, I must refer you to the 1 Cor. Chap. 14. which seems to be penn'd on Purpose by the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost, to shew and assure us, how improper it is to pray in an unknown Tongue, how unlawful and unprofitable: And that ought to be of more Force in the Conscience of a good and understanding Christian, than all that can be alledg'd against it. When Publick Prayers are made, they ought to be for the Edification of all that hear them: "But he that speaketh in an unknown Tongue, speaketh not to Men, but to God". They should not raise up an uncertain Sound, which the Hearers cannot apprehend, or fix a Rational Idea upon it: "Except the Pipe or Harp give a Distinction in the Sound, how can it be known what is piped or harped? For if the Trumpet give an uncertain Sound, who shall prepare himself to the Battel". And if there be such a Confusion of Sounds at Prayer, who can fix his Heart upon it, how shall it be known what is spoken? For he that prays, "speaks into the Air". They should not amaze and distract the Hearers, and put their Thoughts upon Enquiry after that which is said: For if they do not understand him that prays, they will appear *Barbarians* to one another. "If I know not the Voice, I shall be to him that speaketh a *Barbarian*, and he that speaketh shall be a *Barbarian* unto me". So that if Prayer is in an unknown Tongue, there can be no Profit or Edification to the Hearers: They may kneel and stare upon him that prays, and wonder at what he speaks, and perhaps may imagine by the Motion of his Lips, Hands and Eyes, that some such Duty as Prayer is performing; but cannot understand whether he that speaks petitions for what they want, and humbly implores what they most desire. St. Paul tells us, that such Addresses to Heaven are so surprising, that if Strangers, who are unacquainted with this Worship, should come into the Congregation, they would be apt to censure the Auditory, as besides themselves. *If the whole Church be come to one Place, and all speak with Tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say, ye are mad?*

II. This is repugnant to the Custom of the Primitive Church, or the Apostles Practice. For the Gift of Tongues was conferred upon them,

them, that they might be able to speak to the People, and pray with them in their own Language, of what Denomination soever : And according as the Gospel succeeded in several Nations, the Languages that were natural to them, were employ'd in making Supplications and Prayers, and every Tongue did set forth the Glory of God ; not only the *Latin*, which is so much in Use amongst the *Romans* ; but all other Tongues were taken up in Divine Praises, and in calling upon God for Mercy in Christ Jesus : As may be prov'd from the Manner of converting People to Christianity ; the Testimony of those that liv'd in the Primitive Times ; and the Concurrence of some of the *Roman Church*, who being convinc'd by the Force of Truth, have yielded in this Point.

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1. The Manner of converting People to Christianity makes it plain, that their Prayers were in a known Tongue. For God enabled the Apostles to speak it, that they might discourse with them in their own Language, and pray to God for them in their own Tongue, that they might recommend the Reasons of Christianity, and direct them to God through Jesus Christ for Mercy. This was the very Design, which God had in giving them the Use of Tongues, and the People they travell'd to might see, that this was the Reason why they spoke to them in their own Language, and propos'd the Gospel to their Understandings, in Words they were us'd to. For when they were converted, they had not a new Tongue given them, nor were they enabled to use another Language, different from that they were brought up in. But the *Gauls* were permitted to use their own Tongue, the *Germans* theirs, and the *Britains* theirs also. For it was not necessary that they should speak otherwise than they did, because they were acquainted with the Gospel, and had forsaken their Idols : And as they changed not their Language with their Religion, they must use it in their Prayers, and might join with him, who was miraculously enabled to speak it to them, when he call'd upon God the Father in their Behalf : Nay, they must of Necessity pray in their own Tongue, or not at all, unless we can suppose, that he that converted them, prayed in a Tongue which they did not understand ; or was so vain as to call upon God in a Language they knew not, when he knew he was miraculously enabled to speak their own Language to them. One wou'd think that in common Prudence, such would chuse as well to pray with them in their own Language, as to convince them of the Truth of Christianity in it; it being as proper, as fit, and as necessary for their Converts, to know how to pray, as to understand how to believe, and to consider what was petition'd for, as what was done and suffer'd in their Behalf. And whenever those that were Instruments in converting them, departed, they must of Necessity (being left to themselves) either pray in their own Language, or receive an Inspiration to pray in another, or not pray at all. So that the Manner of publishing the Gospel supposes, that every Tongue was sanctify'd for Prayer, as well as Preaching ; and that that Language was properest for publick Devotions, which might best serve the Design of Prayer, and turn most to the Advantage and Edification of the People :

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XXIV.Act. 2. 8. 11,
the latter Part.

ple : That as God gave the Gift of Tongues by Miracle, that all Nations might come to the saving Knowledge of his Son : So after they had known him, they might employ their own natural Languages in Prayers and Supplications before him. *How bear we every Man in our own Tongue, wherein we were born, — the wonderful Works of God?*

2. The Testimony of those that lived in those early Days assures us, that it was their Custom to pray in their own Language ; and in any Nation, the Tongue, how different soever from others, was sanctify'd to the Use of the Church. When St. Paul was amongst the *Hebrews*, he spoke *Hebrew* ; and without doubt prayed with them in that Language : And when he was amongst the *Grecians*, he prayed with them in *Greek* ; when he came to *Rome*, I make no doubt but he spake *Latin*, when he prayed amongst them, and called upon God in *Latin* : And when *Joseph of Arimathea* came hither, he spake the Tongue of the Nation, and prayed with the *Britains* in their own native Language. And so the rest of the Apostles, whatever People they came to ; as they had the Language of that People given them, they spake it to them, and prayed to God in the same. This the very Nature of their Behaviour supposes, and the History of those Primitive Times makes good in Fact : For wherever there were any Converts made, we may be sure they us'd their own Tongue, and made their Supplications in it, as was found and known in all those Nations, in which the Gospel was entertain'd. It being necessary, that those that speak in Publick, should speak (as St. *Augustine* says) to be understood. And what St. *Origen* declares, may pass for the Sense of the Primitive Times : "The *Grecians* (says he) use the *Greek* Words in their Prayers ; the *Romans*, *Latin* ; and every one prays to God in his own Language ; and he that is Lord of every Language, hears that which is petition'd in any Language". And as this is the Voice of the Primitive Times, it can be judged no other, than an Usurpation to thrust the *Latin* upon every Nation, as if their own Tongue was not as good to pray in, as it was before ; or as if it was not as acceptable to God, though never so barbarous, as the *Latin*. For if the Souls of the *Barbarians* may be sav'd, their Tongue is acceptable to the Lord that bought them, when their Petitions come from the Heart, and unfeigned Lips. The *Psalmist* thought so, when he said ; *Let every Thing that hath Breath, praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.*

Psal. 150. 6.

3. Some of the *Roman* Communion concur with us, and give up this Point (being convinc'd by the Force of Truth), and acknowledge, that Publick Prayers in the Primitive Times were made in the Language understood by the People. Thus *Lyra* in his Comment upon 1 Cor. 14. 16. "How shall he that is in the Room of the Unlearned, say *Amen* ? That is, what do the simple and ignorant People profit ? Nothing, or very little, because they cannot answer *Amen* to you, that act the Minister of the Church ; for which Cause in the Primitive Church, the Benedictions, and the rest of the Office was perform'd in the *Vulgar Tongue*". And

upwards of 450 Years ago, the Council of *Lateran* decreed, That because in many Places, there was a mixed People of divers Languages, the Bishops should provide Men, that might officiate according to their different Languages. Others might be produced, who confess the same: So mighty is Truth when attended to! And however *Latin* is the Language in Repute in *Roman* Temples, I know no better way to convince you of the Unreasonableness of such Prayers which are not understood, than by attending to those in Conversation, who speak in a Language ye understand not. And if upon hearing of *French*, *Dutch*, or *Welsh*, ye remain as ignorant as if ye never had heard it, and are perfect Strangers to the meaning of it; ye must own, that Prayers in the same Languages would be as impertinent and unsuitable, as in Conversation Discourse would be; and that it is next to mocking of God and imposing on the People, to propose such Petitions to be us'd, which turns Devotion into meer Sound. Our Lord's Words may be in this Case properly applied; *Ye Hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesie of you, saying, this People draweth nigh unto me with their Mouth, and honoureth me with their Lips; but their Heart is far from me.* For when the Prayer is not understood, the Heart cannot be concern'd.

Mat. 15. 7, 8,

From this Explanation of the Article, we should bless God, that our Prayers are in our own Tongue; that we ought to be devout in making of them; that we cannot be excus'd if we neglect them; and that the more constant and fervent we are at them, the more likely are we to be the better Christians, and to be blessed in our Deeds.

1. We have reason to bless God, that our Prayers are in our own Language, and our Bibles too. Our Church has taken care, that ye may consider and understand before-hand, what ye are to offer to Almighty God; and that which is excepted against by some, is her Commendation. For since Tongues are ceased, and immediate Impulses of the Spirit are laid aside, she has consulted the Wants of a People; and in proper Forms appointed such Prayers to be made, which are agreeable to our present State, and proper for the Learned and Unlearned, the Knowing and the Ignorant, to make together. And that every one may come hither with a Devout Heart, and Ready Mind, to pray with the Congregation, she allows you the Prayers to peruse, puts the same into your Hands, causes them to be pronounc'd with an Audible Voice, that all may joyn Hearts and Voices together, without any fear of Mistake, or Inadvertency. She leaves not the Minister to his own Invention, lest he should omit or forget what is necessary, or entertain the Ear with Tautology and Impertinence; but presents her Supplications in proper Words, in an intelligible manner, that every one of us may pray with all Humility, and beg of God with Earnestness for Acceptance. And as this is your Happiness, would ye pray as ye are directed, and as it may turn to your own and the Nation's Good; so it will be your Fault, if ye neglect such fair Opportunities of calling upon God, and deprive your selves of those Blessings which ye might thus petition for, and obtain. The Words, I confess, are the same, and so are your

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Ecclef. 5. 2.

Wants and Weaknesses ; and the Variety of the Phrase can neither move the Divine Compassion the sooner, or relieve you. Your Saviour who taught you to pray, has directed you to the same Words. And in his Agony he repeated the same Words. And if he who knew the Mind of his Heavenly Father, was satisfy'd, that the same Words in Prayer, urg'd again and again, were no Hindrance, but rather a Furtherance to Devotion, we have the more Reason to use the same Prayer, and to make it the common Prayer of the whole Nation. When we consider, how Mean and Vile we are, and how Tremendous the Majesty of Heaven is, we may well thank him, that such Prayers are prepar'd for our Use, which are proper for him to hear, and for us to present unto him in his Son's Name. *Be not rash with thy Mouth, and let not thy Heart be hasty to utter any thing before God ; for God is in Heaven, and thou upon Earth, therefore let thy Words be few.*

Ecclef. 5. 1.

2. We ought to be devout in making these Prayers, which are so well weigh'd, consider'd, and fitted for Publick Use. Prayer at any Time, and in any Place, ought to be perform'd with Reverence and Care ; but when we come together in the Lord's House to make our Supplications before him, how ought we to compose our Minds and Hearts, for True and Unfeigned Devotion ? How should we prepare our selves at Home, that we may be attentive here ? And how should we apply our Thoughts, that we may say *Amen* to every Petition from the very Soul ? Were ye to observe the Devotion of *Papists* before their Altars and Images, when they do not understand what is said, ye might blush at your own Heedlessness and Inadvertency, or condemn your own lazy Postures, and profane Behaviour. They will be upon their Knees with an unwearied Zeal, while their *Latin* Prayers are put up. But it is well with us, if a few kneel, many stand, and too many sit and look on, as if they were not concern'd in the Petition. Let us rouse up from this heedless Temper ; and as we know our Prayers are proper for us, let us summon up our best Attention ; joyn our sincerest Affections ; discover our heartiest Care, Zeal, and Consent, and pray as those that must be forgiven or ruin'd, that must be heard or undone. If ye were to beg a Favour of a Prince, how Eager, Hearty, and Careful would ye be ? Know ye not, that here is present with you the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords ? That ye are to beg of him for Life and Peace ? And will ye not compose your selves as in his Eye, reverence his Presence, and pray to him in your Church's Language, with unfeigned Devotion and Humiliation, that he may hear, pity, and answer ? *Keep thy Foot when thou goest to the House of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the Sacrifice of Fools ; for they consider not that they do Evil.*

3. Ye cannot be excus'd if ye neglect such Prayers, duly consider'd and compos'd for your Use ; for as ye want those Things, which such Prayers petition for, ye act against your own Safety and Peace, if ye despise and slight them ; ye cannot expect to be supply'd, unless ye ask ; and if ye will not ask, when the Prayers are ready for you, whom can you blame but your selves ? If ye are not
blessed

bleſſed in your Deeds, what can be ſaid in your Excuse, when ye ſtand without till the Prayers are over? Are ye willing to ſtand without, when the Doors of the Kingdom may be ſhut againſt you? Or if ye would enter then, why will ye not enter in at the beginning, and pray as for a Kingdom? Can a Sermon be better than Prayers, or Advice be more valuable than a Bleſſing? And will ye be ſo vain as to abſent your ſelves till the time of Praying is over, and thruſt your ſelves in when that Advice is given, that may ſhow you to pray, and which ye reſolve to ſlight? If after this ye will deſpiſe your Prayers, the time may come when it will be too late to pray, though ye would. *Afterwards came the other Virgins ſaying, Lord, Lord, open to us: But he answered and ſaid, Verily I ſay unto you, I know you not.*

Mat. 25. 11, 12.

4. The more conſtant and upright we are in our Devotions, the more likely we are to be heard, to be the better Chriſtians, and to be bleſſed in our Deeds. Our Prayers will improve us more than Hearing; and as we call upon God, we ſhall be ſtrengthen'd for his Service, and ſhall endeavour to pleaſe him in Newneſs of Life; we ſhall pray the more, and obey the more, and credit our Prayers by our Converſations. As then we have *Engliſh Prayers*, let us be Devout and Conſtant at them; that what is our Advantage, may not be our Condemnation. *In the Church I had rather ſpeak five Words with my Underſtanding, than by my Voice I may teach others, than ten thouſand words in an unknown Tongue.*

1 Cor. 14. 19.

“be certain true Wiſdomes, and theſe are theſe of Grace, and God’s good Will towards us, by which he doth work inwardly in us, and not only quicken, but ſtrengthen our Faith in him.”
“be Two Sacraments ordained of Chriſt our Lord in the Goſpel: that is to ſay, Baptiſm, and the Supper of the Lord. Thoſe Five commonly call’d Sacraments; that is to ſay, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and Extreme Unction, are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Goſpel: becauſe they have not grown partly of the doctrine following of the Apoſtles; partly, are States of Life, as in the Scriptures; partly, becauſe they are like Nature of Sacraments with Figure, and the Lord’s Supper: For that they have not any viſible ſign or Ceremony ordained of God. The Sacraments were not ordained of Chriſt to be giv’d upon, or to be carried about, but that we ſhould daily ſtudy them: And in ſuch only, as worthily receive the ſame, they have a wholeſome Effect, or Operation. But they that receive them unworthily, purchaſe to themſelves Damnation, as St. Paul ſaith.” Here note.

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“Sacraments ordained of Chriſt, be not only Figures and Tokens of Chriſtian Men’s Faith, but rather they be certain true Wiſdomes and ſpecial Signs of Grace and God’s good Will towards us, by which he doth work inwardly in us; and not only quicken, but ſtrengthen our

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ARTICLE XXV.

MARK XIV. 22.

And as they did eat, Jesus took Bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave unto them, and said, Take, eat, this is my Body.

IT was in the Power of our Lord to appoint and ordain what Rites he thought proper for the Church; that as he was Lord of the House, he might retain the Government of it, and provide for the Safety and Happiness of all in it. For this Reason he hath commanded Baptism and the Eucharist. **And as they did eat, Jesus took Bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave unto them, and said, Take, eat, this is my Body.**

Which may give us an Occasion to explain the Twenty Fifth Article, which says, "Sacraments ordain'd by Christ, be not only Badges and Tokens of Christian Men's Profession, but rather they be certain sure Witnesses, and effectual Signs of Grace, and God's good Will towards us, by which he doth work invisibly in us; and not only quicken, but strengthen our Faith in him. There be Two Sacraments ordain'd of Christ our Lord in the Gospel; that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord. Those Five, commonly call'd Sacraments; that is to say, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and Extreme Unction, are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel; being such as have grown partly of the corrupt Following of the Apostles; partly, are States of Life allow'd in the Scriptures; but yet have not the like Nature of Sacraments with Baptism, and the Lord's Supper: For that they have not any visible Sign or Ceremony ordain'd of God. The Sacraments were not ordain'd of Christ to be gaz'd upon, or to be carried about, but that we should duly use them: And in such only, as worthily receive the same, they have a wholesome Effect, or Operation. But they that receive them unworthily, purchase to themselves Damnation, as St. Paul saith". Here note,

I. What Sacraments are. Sacraments ordain'd by Christ, be not only Badges and Tokens of Christian Men's Profession, but rather they be certain sure Witnesses and effectual Signs of Grace and God's good Will towards us, by which he doth work invisibly in us; and not only quicken but strengthen our Faith in him.

II. The

II. The Number of Sacraments ordain'd in the Gospel : There be Two Sacraments ordain'd of Christ our Lord in the Gospel ; that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord. Those Five commonly called Sacraments ; that is to say, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and Extreme Unction, are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel : Being such as have grown partly of the corrupt Following of the Apostles, partly, are States of Life allow'd in the Scriptures, but yet have not the like Nature of Sacraments, with Baptism, and the Lord's Supper ; for that they have not any Visible Sign or Ceremony ordain'd of God. Article XXV.

III. The Use and Effect of the Sacraments : The Sacraments were not ordain'd of Christ to be gazed upon, or to be carried about, but that we should duly use them. And in such only, as worthily receive the same, they have a wholesome Effect or Operation : But they that receive them unworthily, purchase to themselves Damnation, as St. Paul saith.

I. What Sacraments are. Our Church informs us, that they are not only Badges ; and then what they are in themselves.

1. They are not only Badges and Tokens of Christian Men's Profession ; or, though they are external Signs, and in some Sense Badges of the Christian Religion, yet this is not the only Character of them ; they are of an higher Nature, and signify something more than bare Profession of the Christian Religion : They may indeed pass for proper Cognizances, by which the Flock of Christ is, or may be discovered, and may be useful to distinguish Christians from all other Religions in the World, as once Circumcision and the Paschal Lamb were Tokens of the Jewish Dispensation ; but this is not all that our Sacraments are appointed for, they are of a sublimer Nature, and lead to higher Enjoyments. And whoever looks upon them as no other than distinguishing Ceremonies, thinks too meanly of them : For though they may pass for Badges and Tokens, they are not only such, but of a better and diviner Nature. For by Baptism we put on Christ, and are entitled to his Merits ; and the Bread which we break is the Communion of the Body of Christ. *For as many of you as have been baptiz'd into Christ, have put on Christ.* Gal. 3. 27.

2. Our Church affirms, that the Sacraments are rather certain and sure Witnesses of God's good Will towards us, that they are effectual Signs of his Favour ; that they convey and make over to us his Mercy in his Son, and ensure to us his eternal Love. He thus not only separates us from others, to be his own peculiar People in Christ Jesus, but also works powerfully and invisibly in us ; quickens and strengthens our Faith, confirms and establishes us in his Fear, and enables us to go forward in our Duty, and to remain faithful to the End. Thus by Baptism he adopts us to be his Children, receives us into his Family, and gives us a Measure of Grace to profit withal : He then bestows upon us his Holy Spirit, by

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by which we are enabled for his Service, and may run the Christian Race that is set before us. And when we are come to some Age in his Church, and are capable of examining our selves, and discerning the Lord's Body; he then leads us to his Table, shews us what Provision he hath made for our Spiritual Entertainment, feeds us with the Body and Blood of his Son, reaches to us the Pledges of his great and wonderful Love, and obliges us by all that is sacred, to remain faithful. So that in both the Sacraments there is an inward and spiritual Grace, which far exceeds all external Appearances, by which we are receiv'd into the Church, and made living Members of Christ's Body. *For as often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do shew the Lord's Death till he come.*

1 Cor. 11. 26.

II. The Number of the Sacraments ordain'd of Christ our Lord in the Gospel, are Two; that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord. Baptism was ordain'd by Christ, as an Holy Rite or Ceremony, by which Converts were to be admitted, and receiv'd into his Family, or his Church. Then saith Christ, "Go teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost". And this his Command was look'd upon by the Apostles, as so necessary and binding, that they receiv'd none into the Church, but by Baptism, and judg'd it proper to be administer'd to those, that had received the Holy Ghost. So that none were reputed in those Days to be Members of Christ's Body, but such as were baptiz'd. *Repent and be baptiz'd every one of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the Remission of Sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost.*

Matt. 28. 19.

Act. 2. 38.

Luk. 22. 14,
19. 20.

The Lord's Supper was ordain'd also by Christ himself, to convey to us the Benefits of his Death and Passion, and to assure us of his exceeding great Love, wherewith he hath loved us. It was he that said, "Take, eat, this is my Body; and, drink ye all of this": And as it is his Command, it is his Ordinance, his Supper; and all his Disciples are bound to partake of it. "When the Hour was come, he sat down, and the Twelve Apostles with him; and he took Bread, and gave Thanks, and brake and gave unto them, saying, "This is my Body, which is given for you, this do in Remembrance of me. Likewise also the Cup after Supper; saying, "This Cup is the New Testament in my Blood, which is shed for you". These are the Two Sacraments ordain'd by the Lord Jesus, who hath power to appoint Sacraments, and to oblige his Servants to use them.

But besides these which are the undoubted Sacraments of the Christian Church, there are Five others added, under the Pretence of Sacraments, which are not of that Nature: Such are Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and Extreme Unction. But these are not to be counted Sacraments; some of them are grown from a corrupt Following, and Imitation of the Apostles; some are States of Life allowed in the Scriptures, but not of the Nature of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper. These are the Reasons, why our Church will not admit them to be Sacraments.

I. Some

1. Some of them have risen from a corrupt following, and imitation of the Apostles; these are Confirmation, Penance, and Extreme Unction. For the Apostles did confirm the Weak, and strengthen their Brethren; and our Church allows of such Confirmation, so far as is consistent with the Ancient Practice of Christians. She does appoint, that those that are come to Years of Discretion, should take their Baptismal Vows upon themselves, and by the laying on of the Hands of the Bishop, and Prayer, should be recommended to the Grace of God, and prepared for the Lord's Supper. But this does by no means make it a Sacrament, or give it that Reputation.

Penance too arose from the corrupt Imitation of the Apostles. The incestuous *Corinthian* was to be delivered unto Satan by St. Paul's Order, that he might be punished in the Flesh, and that his Spirit might be saved in the Day of the Lord. And so far as this may be lawfully imitated, our Church allows of it; and in Conformity to the best Times, enjoins heinous Sinners to confess their Sins, and to receive Absolution; but upon their Obstinacy proceeds to Excommunication; and heartily desires, that that Primitive Discipline were renewed, and brought into Practice. But yet we count it no Sacrament, but a Godly Discipline, wholesome, and useful for the Recovery of Sinners. Neither can we apprehend, how Satisfaction can be made for Sin, or how the going barefoot, or receiving so many Stripes of a Whip, or the repeating so many Prayers can turn to true Repentance.

The like may be said of Extreme Unction, that that springs also from a corrupt following of the Apostles. It was customary, so long as Miracles continued, for the Elders of the Church to pray over the Sick, and to anoint them with Oyl in the Name of the Lord; and those that were thus anointed, were miraculously recover'd, and rais'd up. But since Miracles are ceas'd, we judge that this Custom is to be laid aside, as not answering the Institution of it, and that it is so far from being a Sacrament, that it is not a visible Sign of Spiritual Grace to all Generations.

2. Some of them are but States of Life allowed of in Scripture; and in being such, they are very improperly rank'd amongst the Sacraments; these are Orders and Matrimony. As for Orders, no doubt but that God has appointed in Scripture, that certain Men should be set apart for the Work of the Ministry, by the laying on of Hands, and the Invocation of the Holy Spirit: Thus *Timothy* is enjoined to lay Hands suddenly on no Man. But though God has appointed an Order of Men to be thus separated, their Ordination is no Sacrament; 'tis only a necessary Separation for that Work to which they are called, and by which they are consecrated to the Service of God. Matrimony also is a State of Life appointed for the Propagation of Mankind; but is so far from being a Sacrament, that it is only a necessary Covenant betwixt two Persons, Male and Female, to live together in holy Love to their Lives end, and to bring up the Children, which God shall give them, in his Fear, and

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Heb. 13. 4.

to his Glory. *Marriage is honourable in all, and the Bed undefiled; but Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge.*

3. All these reputed Sacraments are not of the like Nature with Baptism and the Supper of the Lord, in that (saith our Church) they have not any visible Sign or Ceremony ordain'd of God. What visible Sign can be fixed upon any one of them, like to Water in Baptism, and Bread and Wine in the Lord's Supper? Nay, where is it written, that Christ allotted any visible Sign to those, when it is plain, that he himself ordained Water, and Bread and Wine for these? Admit, that we may term them Religious Ceremonies, which are kept up in imitation of the Apostles, it does not follow, that they are Sacraments, Outward and Visible Signs of Inward and Spiritual Grace, commanded by Christ as Means and Pledges of the same. If such Ceremonies must go for Sacraments, then the putting off of *Moses's* Shoes, when the Lord appeared to him in a Bush, may pass for as good a Sacrament as any of them. But as Christ is Lord of his own House, and alone appoints his own Sacraments; his express Command must be produced, or they must remain no better than Ceremonies, and can deserve no other Character.

III. The Use and Effects of the Sacraments in general. And,

1. They are not ordained to be carried about, and gaz'd upon, but for Religious Use. What Profit can it bring to the Souls of Men, to have the consecrated Bread put into a Silver Box, and to be carried abroad in great Pomp, under a Canopy of State, attended with Priests in their Vestments, and burning Tapers at Noon-day? Was it for this Use that the Body of Christ was slain, and his Blood shed? Or could he design, that the Signs of his Passion should be represented with so much show? Without doubt he ordained his Sacraments to be duly used, devoutly applied, and to convey Grace and Favour to the Soul.

2. Upon such as receive them worthily, they produce a wholesome Effect, and do good; but turn to their eternal Hurt, that receive them unworthily; for such hasten their own Destruction, and purchase to themselves Damnation. Thus when Men are Baptiz'd, if they come in a worthy manner, repent of their Sins, believe in Jesus, and resolve upon an Holy Life, they shall be Pardoned, Assisted, and Blessed in their Deeds. But if they come to Baptism, without any Sorrow for Sin committed, without Faith in Christ, or Resolutions of Amendment; they but despise the Mercy of God in Christ; and hasten, nay aggravate their own Condemnation. Again, when Men are Baptiz'd, and have liv'd under the Gospel for some time, if they take no care how to live in the Fear of God, do not examine themselves, nor vow all possible Obedience; but come rashly to the Lord's Table, and Eat and Drink without Repentance, without Faith in Christ, and sincere Resolutions of better Obedience, they unadvisedly hurt their own Souls, despise the Blood of the Covenant,

venant, and Eat and Drink their own Damnation. But if on the other hand, Men have taken care, after their Baptism to live up to it, and strictly consider and examine their Hearts and Lives: If they heartily repent, are in perfect Charity, believe in the Lord Jesus, and trust to him for Salvation, they are bound to meet their Lord at his own Feast, may thankfully partake of the Pledges of his Love, cheer themselves up with the Hope of Pardon and Peace, and may find the wholesome Effects of that Sacrament in their Hearts and Lives, may receive more Grace to help in the time of Need, and more Encouragement to remain faithful. And thus the Sacraments, when duly receiv'd, are of great Use in our Way to Heaven, and through the Divine Goodness, may turn to our Welfare and Salvation. *But let a Man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.* 1 Cor. 11. 28.

From this ye may see the Tenderneſs of our Church; The Obligations that are upon you; And the Care ye ſhou'd take to walk worthily.

1. The Tenderneſs of our Church is great; for ſhe does not multiply Sacraments, and lay greater Burthens upon you, than what Chriſt hath laid; nor does ſhe amuſe you with Pageantry and Show: She aſſures you, that there are but Two Sacraments; and that theſe are to be uſed with all Attention and Care: By the One ye are conſecrated to God; and by the Other, ſtrengthen'd for his Service: And ſhe deſires you to regard them, according to the Honour that your Lord hath put upon them, as Witneſſes of his good Will, as Signs of his Grace, and as Tokens of his Love. What Tenderneſs can be greater towards your Souls? What Compaſſion more obliging? She would bring you to God, and feed you with the Bread of Life: And what is ſaid of a faithful Servant, may be applied to her, "which takes Care of the Houſhold, and gives them their Portion in due Season". *Blessed is that Servant, whom the Lord, when he cometh, ſhall find ſo doing.* Luk. 12. 43.

2. Ye muſt be ſenſible of the Obligations, that are upon you: For ye are the Children of God in Chriſt; ye have been by one Sacrament receiv'd into the Church, and put upon your good Behaviour: And by the other ye are to be ſtrengthened and comforted. So that ye are as much obliged, as Men can be, to live in the Fear of God, and to walk worthy of Chriſt. If ye are baptiz'd, ye are no longer your own, but his who died for you; and ye can do no leſs than take care how to walk, and answer the Holy Laws of your Religion: But if ye have frequented the other Sacrament, ye have renewed your Vows, and repeated your Reſolutions; and 'tis expected that ye ſhould eſpecially live, as the Redeemed of the Lord; for ye have received the ſure and certain Wit-

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Matt. 24. 34.

nesses and Testimonies of his Favour, and would be ungrateful and unworthy, should ye forsake your Lord or his Service. To conclude, Both Sacraments are for our Support in this perilous State; if we are devoted by the one, we ought to frequent the other; that as one puts us upon God's Service, the other may confirm us in it; and Both, as they were ordain'd, may lead us to Christ, and entitle us to his Grace. *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the Foundation of the World*

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2 COR. IV. 7.

But we have this Treasure in earthen Vessels, that the Excellency of the Power may be of God, and not of us.

AS God hath appointed an Order of Men to serve in the Sanctuary, and given to them the Word of Salvation, he allows them to be Men, subject to the like Infirmities and Failings, which others labour under; and does not secure them from the common Errors of Human Life: That the Excellency of the Power intrusted to them, may depend upon his Concurrence and Blessing. **But we have this Treasure in Earthen Vessels, that the Excellency of the Power may be of God, and not of us.**

Which may help us to understand the Twenty Sixth Article, which says; "Although in the Visible Church, the Evil be ever mingled with the Good, and sometimes the Evil have chief Authority in the Ministration of the Word and Sacraments; yet forasmuch as they do not the same in their own Name, but in Christ's, and do minister by his Commission and Authority, we may use their Ministry, both in hearing the Word, and in receiving the Sacraments: Neither is the Effect of Christ's Ordinance taken away by their Wickedness, nor the Grace of God's Gifts diminish'd from such, as by Faith, and rightly do receive the Sacraments minister'd unto them; which are effectual, because of Christ's Institution and Promise, although they be minister'd by evil Men. Nevertheless it appertaineth to the Discipline of the Church, that Enquiry be made of evil Ministers, and that they be accus'd of those that have Knowledge of their Offences, and finally, being found guilty, by just Judgment be depos'd". Let us Consider,

I. That in the Visible Church, there are always good and bad: In the Visible Church, the Evil be ever mingled with the Good.

II. That sometimes the Evil are entrusted with the chief Authority and Government in it: And sometimes the Evil have chief Authority in the Ministration of the Word and Sacraments.

III. We

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III. We may use the Ministry of such evil Men, without Injury to our Souls : Forasmuch as they do not the same in their own Name, but in Christ's, and do minister by his Commission and Authority ; we may use their Ministry, both in Hearing the Word of God, and in receiving the Sacraments.

IV. The good Effects of the Word and Sacraments are not taken away by their Ministry : Neither is the Effect of Christ's Ordinance taken away by their Wickedness, nor the Grace of God's Gifts diminished from such, as by Faith, and rightly do receive the Sacraments ministred unto them ; which are effectual, because of Christ's Institution and Promise, although they be administred by evil Men.

V. Yet it is necessary that evil Ministers be censur'd, and being found guilty, depos'd : It appertaineth to the Discipline of the Church, that Enquiry be made of evil Ministers, and that they be accused of those, that have knowledge of their Offences, and finally being found Guilty, by just Judgment be depos'd.

I. In the Church there are always good and bad : The Evil are ever mingled with the Good, and sometimes it is difficult to discern one from another. There will be Tares and Wheat growing in the same Field, and there is no separating of them, till the Harvest : And there will be Fish good and bad taken in the same Net ; and there is no parting, till they are drawn Ashore. When the Day of Judgment is come, there will be expresse Orders given to make a Separation ; in the mean Time they must be permitted to mingle, and to crowd together, and we cannot help it. The Angels at last shall have a Commission to gather the Wheat into the Garner, to bind up the Tares by themselves, and to burn them up with the Chaff with unquenchable Fire. 'Tis in vain therefore to expect a Church free from corrupted Members ; or to think it can be made purer than the present State will allow, or to seek for a Communion that is unmixed, undefiled, and made up of Saints only : That Happiness is reserv'd for the other World ; but in this we must take Men as they are, Good and Bad, Sincere and Hypocrites, Holy and Wicked one with another ; for it is not in our Power to know the Heart, or to search out the hidden Intentions of the Soul : if they are as good as they pretend to be, let us thank God for it ; but if they appear better than they are, be it to themselves, they stand before their great Lord, who will bring to light the Secrets of the Heart, and then shall every one be known to be what he is ; and if good, shall have praise of God. *The Servants said unto him, wilt thou that we go, and gather them up ? But he said, Nay, lest whilst ye gather up the Tares, ye root up also the Wheat with them.*

Matt. 13. 28,
29.

II. Sometimes the Evil are entrusted with the chief Authority and Government in the Church, in the Administration of the Word and Sacraments ; for though they are admitted into the Ministry, they are not secur'd from Sin, but stand by Faith as well as others ; and when

when Temptations arise, are as liable to fall. Hence it has happen'd, that many ordain'd for the Work of the Ministry, have not proved the best Men. And notwithstanding their evil Behaviour, what by some powerful Interest, which values the Man more than his Morals, or what by some strange conjunction of Favour, have been rais'd with their Vices to the highest Seats in the Church, have been entrusted with the chiefest Authority and Power; and have had the Management of the Word and Sacraments, and the command over the Servants of Christ. Our Lord himself had a *Judas* amongst his Apostles; and there is scarcely a Bishop's Chair throughout the World, but what at one time or other hath been filled with evil Men, Haughty and Powerful. The Catalogue of Popes affords us abundance, besides *Silvester* and *Hildebrand*. The See of *Canterbury* has had a *Becket*; the Diocese of *London* a *Bonner*. And amongst the inferior Clergy not a few have dishonour'd their Holy Calling, and shown themselves unworthy of their Ministration. And how can it be otherwise, when there is such a vast Multitude attending the Sanctuary, and have this Treasure in Earthly Vessels? Neither are those that dissent from us excusable in this Respect, as much as they value themselves for Holiness. For many of their Teachers have prov'd the vilest of Men, and a Shame to their Followers: However, Vice is excusable in none; and if any are like to fare worse in the great Day, doubtless such as are bound to teach others, and are wicked themselves, shall bear their Burthen. *But and if that Servant say in his Heart, My Lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to beat the Men Servants, and Maidens, and to eat, and drink, and to be drunken: The Lord of that Servant will come in a Day when he looketh not for him, and in an Hour when he is not aware, and will cut him asunder, and appoint him his Portion with Unbelievers.*

Luke 12: 45;
46.

III. We may use the Ministry of such evil Men without Injury to our Souls; for as they act not in their own Name, but in Christ's, and administer by his Commission and Authority, we may joyn with them, and expect the Divine Blessing upon their Labours; for the Word is Christ's Word which they preach; the Sacraments are Christ's Sacraments which they Administer; and he may prosper his Word, and succeed his Sacraments, though evil Men should be the Ministers. The Gospel was the same out of the Mouth of *Judas*, as out of the Mouth of *James* or *John*. And Truth is the same when it falls from the Lips of a vile Man, as when a Saint pronounces it. The Personal Faults of no Man can render his Office ineffectual. An ordinary Constable has the Power, though he should be Wicked; and a vicious Courtier may bring a Proclamation of Pardon to Rebels, as well as a good one; and the Pardon is of as much Force, as if it came by a better Hand. When therefore God sends those to warn his People, and to invite them to Mercy, who remain Evil, God's Promises are as effectual, mention'd by such, as when delivered by one that is Holy, and without Rebuke; for the Promises depend not upon his Man's Qualifications, but upon the Veracity

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Veracity and Power of God. His Truth is establish'd as the Mountains, his Power all-sufficient, though the Men that proclaim it are not so dutiful as they should be; we may use their Ministry, forasmuch as they do not Minister in their own Name, but in Christ's, and by his Authority.

1. We may safely use the Ministry of Evil Men, forasmuch as they Minister not in their own Name; and their Personal Faults are no reasonable Prejudice against the Service of God; there is no reason that the worst Sins of an evil Man should hinder the Service of Christ, or that his Name and Cause should suffer upon the Minister's Account. Who would be content, that his Message should be slighted, because the Messenger has his Faults? Or can think it reasonable, that the King's Authority should be despis'd, because the Officer-invested with it, is an ill Man? Evil Men shall answer for the Evil done by them; but the Word of Eternal Life cannot be polluted by Evil Ministers; neither may the Authority of God be disregarded, because under their Management. Be the Man what he will, he is God's Minister to thee for Good; he has the Message of Life and Death; and it behoves thee to attend to what he says. And if he will not live according to his own Doctrine, be it to himself. He may hear what God says especially to him: *But unto the wicked, God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my Statutes; or that thou shouldest take my Covenant in thy mouth?*

Psal. 50. 16.

2. Evil Ministers preach in the Name of Christ, and administer the Sacraments by his Commission: They have express Order from him to do thus, and officiate for him: And however odd it may seem, that an evil Man should be a Messenger from the Holy Jesus; yet since he permits such to bear this Character, we are to look up to him that sends, as chiefly concern'd, and may not quarrel at the Messenger. If he thought fit that no evil Man should be concern'd in his Ministration, he could easily, either by his Providence prevent it, or by his Grace make him better. But he is willing to try the Minister as well as People; and to see how faithful all will be in their Stations. If Ministers will so far forget themselves and their Duty, as to remain vicious, their Lord will account with them; but in the mean while they are his Servants, his Lot, and his Inheritance; and though very bad, are appointed to set Life and Death before you. The Scribes and Pharisees were ill Men, and yet because they sat in Moses's Chair, our Saviour enjoins his Disciples to hear them. Many of the Priests were wicked, and yet were allowed to stand before the Altar, and to officiate in the Temple. And if under the Gospel, some Ministers are ill Men, they sit as in the Chair of Christ, are his Ambassadors, and the Word of God deliver'd by them, is of as much Force, as if spoke by an Angel. *Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*

1 Cor. 5. 20.

IV. The good Effects of God's Word and Sacraments are not taken away by their Ministry. For the Efficacy of his Ordinances depends upon his Institution and Promise, and not upon the Mo-

Morals of Men. If therefore Men come to hear the Word of God, and to partake of his Sacraments, with a prepared Disposition of Mind, they may experience the Assistance of Grace, and find Acceptance, though they are under an evil Minister. Thus when a vicious Man prays fervently, preaches sound Doctrine, and with all Reverence and Gravity administers the Sacraments, the Auditory may profit by him, through the Grace of God, because he does God's Work; and the Success is left to God, which is oftentimes considerable under such Instruments. Besides, 'tis so hard a Matter to know a good and holy Man, that if Evil might hinder the Operations of Grace, the Congregation would be at a Loss concerning their Minister; because not able to discern the Heart, or to distinguish the Hypocrite from the Sincere: For he that is reputed good, may for ought they know, be an evil Man; and he that is called (through Slander) evil, may be a good Man; and they may not be able to discover the one from the other: And then the Ministry of the Hypocrite must be as dangerous, as the Ministration of the Vicious; and the Evil in one, as hurtful as in another; the same, known or unknown. And the People can never be sure, that they serve God acceptably, unless they could discern the Hearts of all that minister unto them. To prevent this Distraction and Mischief, God permits evil Men, as well as good, to remain in the Ministry, and obliges the People to mind his Will, and to regard his Word more than the Faults of the Minister. Thus a serious Regard to his Laws may reform them, and perhaps shame their Pastors into better Manners. *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the Will of my Father, which is in Heaven.* After all,

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Matt. 7. 21.

V. It is necessary that evil Ministers be censured, and when found guilty, that they be depos'd by just Judgment. For when Ministers become scandalous in Life, and offensive to the Flock of Christ; when they are Examples in Sin, which should be Patterns of Righteousness; when the People despise the Service of God upon their Account, and encourage themselves in their Wickedness by their Vices; it is necessary that they should be accus'd by those that have perfect Knowledge of their Crimes, and that they be censur'd and punish'd: But then it is fit and just that the Accusers be Men of Sobriety and Charity; that they be not acted with Prejudice and factious Zeal; that they be not haughty and disdainful, such as may defame the Innocent, blacken the Worthy, and out of Design accuse the Modest and Best; but such as truly and really aim at God's Glory, and the Credit and Honour of the Church: And if such find the Ministry blameable, the Church is ready to censure, and is not willing that any should perish, (through the Vices of the Minister) for whom Christ died; but desirous that such being found guilty be depos'd, after a fair Hearing. *Against an Elder receive not an Accusation, but before two or three Witnesses.*

1 Tim. 5. 19.

A. a.

From

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From this Explanation of the Article, consider, That there is no Separation to be made upon Earth, of the Good and Evil; That we had better mend our selves than complain against the Ministry; That our Church is ready to punish those that are scandalous.

1. Since the Good and Evil are mingled in the Church, there is no Separation to be made upon Earth; it is so difficult to discern the Hypocrite from the Saint, that it is not to be done here. We may indeed refuse the Conversation of those that are scandalous, in our private Capacity, and our Church allows us to deny them the Sacrament: But it is impossible to separate the Good from the Evil; That is in his Power alone, who will place the Sheep on his Right Hand, and the Goats on the Left: But it is beyond our Power to know the Hearts of Men, and we cannot make a Separation: We are therefore bound in Charity to believe the best of every Man, till plain notorious Facts oblige us to change our Minds; for the modest silent Christians may be the best, and the noisy and zealous may be the most suspicious; we must judge nothing before the Time; and allowing the good and bad in the same Communion, must labour to bring them all to Repentance, and so to Christ. Those therefore that make a Separation for purer Worship, usurp the Place of Angels too soon, and have discover'd their Mistake; their Society remains mix'd, and the Faults of their Brethren may as much defile them at the Sacrament, as the Faults of others. *Therefore judge nothing before the Time, until the Lord come, who will bring to light the hidden Things of Darkness, and will make manifest the Counsels of the Hearts, and then shall every Man have Praise of God.*

1 Cor. 4. 5.

2. We had better mend our Lives, than complain of the Ministry. For ye are upon your Trial and good Behaviour as well as they; and if they be to blame, your Accusation of them will not make you better: The worst of them preach the Word of Reconciliation, and the Grace of God worketh with them. Be not therefore so intent upon their Faults, as mindful of their Advice; nor so prying into their Behaviour, as attentive to their Message; for if ye submit to God's Will, they may be Instruments of doing you Good, whilst they neglect themselves. I could wish that no Offence of that Nature might be given, and that Minister and People might serve God acceptably with Reverence and Godly Fear. But since it will happen that Offences come, and that the Ministry in a factious Age will be blamed, I must request you to regard your own Welfare most, and to provide for your own Happiness; for whether we are blameable or not, it will neither hurt nor profit you. If we do our Duty, ye must answer for your selves; if we do not our Duty, your Condition will not be the better: Whether we are good or evil Men, it will not further or hinder you in the Day of Judgment. Look then at Home, into your own Hearts and Lives, and think not your selves excusable, if you can accuse your Minister. For as ye live, ye will die and be judged. If your Minister shou'd be overtaken with a Fault, it is your Part to cover and conceal; there are enough besides, that will upbraid and condemn him; but if he is harmless and

and holy, his supposed Fault cannot alter the State of your Souls, or condemn him. All that we can do, is to do our best to act for the Honour of our Order. If others will discredit it, we cannot help it, and should not suffer for it. *Giving no Offence in any thing, 2 Cor. 6. 3. that the Ministry be not blamed.*

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3. Our Church is sensible of the Discredit Evil Ministers may bring upon her Communion; and is ready, upon a just Proof, and fair Hearing, to punish those that are scandalous. She is willing to believe, that her Admonitions may take place, her Censures may correct, her Suspensions may reclaim; and is inclin'd to shew Mercy, upon Humiliation, and External Signs of Repentance. And as she is not harsh and unmerciful to the Laity, she is prone to discover the Compassion of a Tender Mother to her Penitent Clergy. But when the Case is notorious, and all Lenity proves ineffectual; she is willing to depose Evil Ministers, by just Judgments. We have Reason, therefore, to admire at the Patience and Forbearance of our Church; and instead of calling for Severity, should commend her Government. She will spare while she may, and punish when she must. We Ministers are *unto God a sweet Saviour of Christ, in 2 Cor. 2. 15, them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one, we are the 16. Saviour of Death unto Death; to the other, the Saviour of Life unto Life. And who is sufficient for these Things?*

ARTICLE XXVII.

1 PET. III. 21. first Part.

**The like Figure whereunto, even Baptism,
doth also now save us.**

AS contemptible as Water-Baptism appears in the Eyes of some, it is appointed by our Lord, as proper for Salvation : That as when the Patience of God, in the Days of *Noah*, waited for the Reformation of the World, Eight Souls were sav'd by Water ; so, under the Gospel, something like it might be a Means to save us. **The like Figure whereunto, even Baptism, doth also now save us.**

Which gives us the Sense of the Twenty seventh Article of our Church. " Baptism is not only a Sign of Profession, and Mark of Difference, whereby Christian Men are discern'd from others, that be not Christened ; but it is also a Sign of Regeneration, or new Birth ; whereby, as by an Instrument, they that receive Baptism rightly, are grafted into the Church ; the Promises of Forgiveness of Sin, and of our Adoption to be the Sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are visibly sign'd and seal'd, Faith confirm'd, and Grace increas'd, by virtue of Prayer unto God. The Baptism of young Children is in any wise to be retained in the Church, as most agreeable with the Institution of Christ.

I. Baptism is a Sign of Christian Profession. Baptism is not only a Sign of Profession, and Mark of Difference, whereby Christian Men are discern'd from other that be not Christen'd ; But,

II. It is also a Sign of Regeneration, or New Birth ; whereby, as by an Instrument, they that receive Baptism rightly, are grafted into the Church ; the Promises of Forgiveness of Sin, and of our Adoption to be the Sons of God, by the Holy Ghost, are visibly sign'd and seal'd ; Faith confirm'd, and Grace increas'd, by virtue of Prayer unto God.

III. Infant-Baptism is most agreeable to the Institution of Christ. The Baptism of young Children is in any wise to be retained in the Church, as most agreeable with the Institution of Christ.

I. Baptism is a Sign of Christian Profession, or a Mark of Difference, to distinguish Christians from others ; by which they are to be known amongst others, to be Christians : That as the *Jews* at first were to be discern'd from others by Circumcision ; so the Disci-

Disciples of Jesus were to be known by Water-Baptism. For our Lord has appointed this Ceremony to be apply'd to all that give up their Names to him, and submit to his Laws: And the voluntary Omission of it, where it may be had, is a manifest Transgression of his Commandment. I know it is pretended, that Christians are to be baptized with the Holy Ghost, and with Fire; and that the Spirit baptizes the Inner Man so effectually, that there is no need of the outward Washing of Water. But this is no more than a Religious Dream, which separates the Spirit from the Application of Water. For, according to our Saviour's Institution, the Spirit does baptize the Soul, when the Body is washed with Water. They are not to be divided; neither is the one to be esteemed sufficient without the other. When the Holy Ghost had fallen upon *Cornelius*, and his Companions, and baptized them with his miraculous Presence, and Gifts; *St. Peter* did not think this sufficient, without the Concurrence of Water; and would not let it pass for Baptism; but rather thought it a most certain Indication, that *Cornelius*, and his Friends, were duly dispos'd to receive Water-Baptism. *Can any man forbid Water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?* Act. 10. 47.

And whereas it is pretended, that Water-Baptism belongs not to Christ, but was instituted by *John* the Baptist, who was to decrease, as Christ increased; or whose Institution was to drop, and be diffus'd, as the Spiritual Baptism of Christ was to come into Practice: It is manifest, that when *St. Paul* found some Disciples of *John* at *Ephesus*, who were only baptiz'd with *John's* Baptism; he caus'd them to be baptiz'd with Water, in the Name of *Jesus*. For after they had been baptiz'd with Water, and when *Paul* thought fit to lay his Hands on them, they were visibly baptized with the Holy Ghost. "Have ye received the Holy Ghost? They answered, We have not so much as heard, whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptiz'd? And they said, unto *John's* Baptism". *St. Paul* replies, that *John* baptiz'd with Water, that they should believe in Christ. "When they heard this, they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus"; and that with Water: For after they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus, "when *Paul* had laid his Hands on them, the Holy Ghost came on them, (not before)" and they spake with Tongues, and prophesied". If therefore Water-Baptism, by the Appointment of our Lord, is attended inwardly with the Spirit, and separates Men for Christianity, according to the ordinary Methods of God's Grace; it must follow, that where there is no Baptism by Water, there is no Christian; or he is no Christian, that is not baptized. Act. 19. 3.

II. Water-Baptism is also a Sign of Regeneration, or New Birth; whereby, as by a Visible Instrument, they that receive it rightly, are grafted into the Church, have the Promises sign'd and seal'd, their Faith confirm'd, and Grace increas'd by Prayer. But this is not done by the Efficacy of bare Water, but by the Operation of the Holy Ghost. 1. By

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1 Cor. 12. 13.

1. By Water-Baptism, Men are grafted into the Church : They were Branches of the wild Olive before, and they are thus inserted, or grafted into the true Olive ; and being by Nature the Children of Wrath, they are hereby made the Children of Grace. For it is that Outward and Visible Sign, which our Saviour has chosen, and set apart, to remove those, that were in a Natural Fallen State, into a Hopeful State of Recovery ; to receive them, upon their Good Behaviour, into the Society of Christians, and to entitle them to the Benefits of his Passion. That as it is usual to use some Ceremony, to be admitted a Member of some Fraternity, or Corporation ; this of Baptism was appointed by our Saviour, to admit Men into his Church ; his Spirit concurring with it : For by one Spirit, we are all baptized with Water, and received into Christ's Family. *By one Spirit, we are all baptized into one Body ; whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free.*

Acts 2 38.

2. By Baptism, the Promises of Forgiveness and Adoption, are sign'd and seal'd visibly by the Holy Ghost. For our Forgiveness and Adoption, are as much made over to us when we are baptiz'd, as an Estate can be convey'd to us, by the Name and Seal of him that gives it. Tho' God is a Spirit, and invisible, yet we are made of Flesh and Blood, and stand in need of External Signs and Seals, to satisfy one another : And God is willing to deal with us in our own way, to humour our Infirmities, and to allow us an External Pledge, Seal or Assurance, of his intended Kindness, in Pardoning and Adopting of us ; that whenever any Doubts or Scruples arise, concerning his Mercy and Compassion, we may remember, how firmly they were made over to us by Baptism, and may remove our Fears, silence our Complaints, and rest satisfy'd in his Truth. That Forgiveness of Sins is then seal'd to us, and Adoption ensur'd, appears plain from Scripture. St. Peter told the Jews, that Remission, or Pardon of Sins, was annexed unto it. *Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the Remission of Sins ; and ye shall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost.*

Tit. 3. 5, 7.

And for Adoption, that also is sealed by it : For by Adoption we are made the Children of God ; and if Children, then Heirs. If then we are made Heirs by Baptism, we are adopted by it, and assured, that we are the Children of God. *He saved us, by the Washing of Regeneration, and Renewing of the Holy Ghost ; that we should be made Heirs, according to the Hope of Eternal Life.*

3. By Baptism, Faith is confirm'd, and Grace increas'd. For such as come with Faith in Christ, and true Repentance, are, by the Application of Water, and the Operation of the Spirit, assured of the Love of God in Christ, strengthen'd for Duty, and received into the immediate Care and Protection of Heaven. That like as when we receive the Hand and Seal for an Estate, we are thereby assur'd, that the Right and Title to it is made over to us ; so when the Water is applied, those that are baptized, have all possible Assurance given them, on this Side Heaven, that they shall not believe in vain, or trust to God in vain. They may rest satisfy'd, that their Faith

Faith is accepted, and that they shall have those Assistances of Grace, that are needful for them. This is confirm'd by the Case of St. Paul; for after he was baptiz'd by Ananias, he grew bold in Faith, and found the Grace of God sufficient for him; he was so strengthened and confirm'd, that he shun'd no Labour, which might testify his Love to his Lord, and met Dangers with a Resolution worthy of an Apostle; which proves that the greatest Saints, and most eminent Christians found, that at Baptism, by Prayer they received Strength from above, and obtained those Assistances, by which they were made able and willing to remain faithful; and the same to this Day is continued to the Church in an ordinary Manner. *For thou shalt be his Witness unto all Men, of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptiz'd, and wash away thy Sins, calling on the Name of the Lord.*

Act. 22. 15;
16.

III. Infant Baptism is to be retain'd, as most agreeable to the Institution, and most consonant to the Practice of the best Times. For though it be granted, that it is no where express'd, that Infants or Children should be baptiz'd; yet there are such weighty Considerations to represent it most likely, and most agreeable to the Apostolical Practice, that I presume no sensible Man, that can lay aside Prejudice, calmly think and consider, and attend to fair Reasoning, can gainsay or oppose it, much less refuse to communicate with a Church, that hath a particular Office for adult Persons, and allows, when there is no apparent Danger, that the Persons baptiz'd be dipped or plunged into Water. It is in the first Place undeniable, that our Saviour did say, "Suffer little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven". It is evident in the next Place, and beyond Dispute, that he did command his Disciples, "to baptize all Nations": And without doubt the Children must be reputed the growing Part of a Nation, and may be baptiz'd with their Parents. It is also very clear, and matter of Fact, that the Apostles baptiz'd whole Households and Families, or all that were in the House. And it must be counted probable at least, that there were some Children as well as Servants; and amongst the Children it is very likely there might be some Infants, and not capable of believing for themselves. And if Servants were baptiz'd when the Master believ'd, as belonging to him, and receiv'd under the same Hope; there is more Reason that Children, being their Parents Possession and Care, should partake of the same Advantage, and should as well as the Servants, be received into Christ's Family. It is undoubted also, as St. Peter told the Jews, that the Promise of Forgiveness is made to Children, as well as others: "The Promise is made to you, and your Children, and to as many as are afar off". And if Children have a Right to the Promise of Mercy, it is reasonable that they should have the same Sign and Seal applied to them, which is appointed to make over the same Promise. Thus as the Children of the Jews were circumcised and received into Covenant, according to the Promise made to their Fathers; the Children of Christians should be baptiz'd, and made Heirs

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Heirs of the same heavenly Promises, which their Parents enjoy : It is moreover very remarkable, that the Children of Christian Parents are commanded, as soon as they can understand what a Command is, to obey their Parents in the Lord. But how can they be obliged to obey their Parents in the Lord, unless they had put on Christ by Baptism, and were so taken into his Family ? Or how can they be bound to observe the Lord's Commands, if they were not in Covenant with him ? It is also fit that the Children of Christians should enjoy the Privileges which the Children of other Men enjoy : And as the Children of *Jews, Turks, and Heathens* possess the same Rights and Advantages, so called, of their Parents Religion, whether true or false : It is more fit and reasonable, that the Children of Christians should possess the Rights and Advantages of Christianity, and enjoy the Privileges of that Covenant, which is made in the Blood of Jesus. And this *St. Paul* owns, who says, that they are holy ; and if holy, have a Right to the holy Covenant, and ought to be baptiz'd, that they may be holy unto the Lord : And agreeable to this, it is most certain, that in the Primitive Times, just after the Martyrdom of the Apostles, within less than Two Hundred Years after our Saviour, the Children of Christians were baptiz'd, and Sponsors, or Godfathers and Godmothers engag'd to the Church, to see that they were instructed in Piety betimes, and Christianly and Virtuously brought up. And because this Practice was so consistent with our Lord's Command, and agreeable to the Sentiments of the best Times, it hath been continued through all Ages to this Day, and in all likelihood will remain to the End of the World. Let all these Reasons be set together, and view'd as they ought, allow them their proper Light and just Weight, and I think it must be granted, that our Church is to be commended for retaining Infant Baptism, as most agreeable to the Institution of our Lord, conformable to the Apostolical Practice, and saving to their Souls ; and that we do well to bring little Children to our Lord, that they may be blessed ; for they belong to the Kingdom of Heaven, were redeemed by the Blood of Jesus, and ought to be presented in his Sanctuary, and consecrated to him. *But Jesus said, Suffer little Children, and forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.*

Matt. 19. 14.

From this Sense of the Article it may be proper to exhort you to vindicate Water-Baptism, to request you to bring your Children to it, and to advise you to walk worthy of it.

I. I may be allowed to exhort you to vindicate Water-Baptism in an Age, in which it is called useless by some, and neglected by others. I know some will say, what signifies a little Water so applied to Infants ? And I may as well say, what signifies a little Breath in their Nostrils ? for he that gave them Life, and continues their Breath in them, hath ordain'd Baptism, and made it as necessary for a Christian, as their Breath for the Preservation of Life. Such Things depend upon the Will of our Lord, and what he hath ordained, must be proper for the End he hath appointed them. And since he hath set apart Water to be a Sign of our Regeneration, and seals the Promises

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mises of Pardon and Adoption by it, it is as efficacious that way, as Air can be for Breath, or Earth for Bread. It is not for Man to dispute against, or despise what God ordains; we may not so much as slight Water, when it is instituted by him as a Means to save our Souls. Some of the *Corinthians* were ill Men before they were baptiz'd; but consider what Water thro' Grace had made them. *And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

1 Cor. 6. 11.

2. I must request you to bring your Children to Baptism, and let there not be so much Occasion of Complaint given, as hath been offered concerning your Neglect. Why should not your Children be as happy in your Saviour's Love, as your selves? Does he invite you to bring them, and will not ye hasten them into his Arms? Does he declare, that of such is the Kingdom of God; and will ye not do what lies in you to make them Heirs of that Kingdom? Ye can do your best in their Behalf to set them out in the World, and will ye not present them to the Lord, that they may be prepar'd for a better World? Be perswaded to lay to Heart their Happiness and Safety, and to do your best to bring them to God. Ye may consider that the first Converts were baptiz'd, and all their Family; And will ye let one, or two, or more remain of your's in their natural State? *And was baptized, be (the Jailor) and all his straightway.*

Act. 16. 33.

3. I must advise you to walk worthy of your Baptism; that as ye have received the Sign of your Christianity, ye may act for the Credit of it; and as ye are thereby regenerated, ye may live as regenerate Men; that as the Promise of Forgiveness is sealed to you, ye may sin no more, lest that which is worse should befall you. And as your Adoption is sealed to you, ye may live as Children, and may, through the Spirit, acquit your selves as the Sons of God. *As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God.*

Rom. 8. 14.

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I COR. X. 17.

We being many are one Bread, and one Body: For we are all partakers of that one Bread.

WHEN we were baptiz'd, and enter'd into Christ's Family, we promised to keep his Commandments: One of which is, that we observe and frequent his Holy Supper in Remembrance of himself; "Do this in Remembrance of me". And in Obedience to this, the Church hath ever since kept up his Memory in this Manner, as well to testify their own Union, and mutual Charity, as to celebrate that Redemption, which he by dying, obtain'd for them. **We being many are one Bread, and one Body; for we are all partakers of that one Bread.**

Which sets forth the Sense of the Twenty Eighth Article, which says, "The Supper of the Lord is not only a Sign of the Love, which Christians ought to have among themselves one to another; but rather it is a Sacrament of our Redemption by Christ's Death: In-
"somuch, that to such as rightly, worthily, and with Faith receive
"the same; the Bread which we break is a partaking of the Body
"of Christ; and likewise the Cup of Blessing is a partaking of the
"Blood of Christ. Transubstantiation, or the Change of the Sub-
"stance of Bread and Wine in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be
"prov'd by Holy Writ; but it is repugnant to the plain Words of
"Scripture, overthroweth the Nature of a Sacrament, and hath
"given Occasion to many Superstitions. The Body of Christ is
"given, taken, and eaten in the Supper, only after an heaven-
"ly and spiritual Manner. And the Means whereby the Body
"of Christ is received, and eaten in the Supper, is Faith. The
"Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's Ordinance
"reserv'd, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped". Let us consider,

- I. That this Sacrament is a Sign of Love; though not only a Sign of the Love, which Christians ought to have among themselves one to another. But,
- II. It is rather a Sacrament of our Redemption by Christ's Death; infomuch, that to such as Rightly, Worthily, and with Faith receive the same; the Bread which we break is a Partaking of the Body of

of Christ ; and likewise the Cup of Blessing is a Partaking of the Blood of Christ.

III. There is no Change of the Bread and Wine by Transubstantiation. Transubstantiation, or the Change of the Substance of Bread and Wine in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be prov'd by Holy Writ, but it is repugnant to the plain Words of Scripture, overthroweth the Nature of a Sacrament, and hath given Occasion to many Superstitions.

IV. We partake of the Body of Christ by Faith, in a Spiritual Manner : The Body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper, only after an Heavenly and Spiritual Manner ; and the Means whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper, is Faith.

V. The Sacrament was not appointed for a Shew : The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's Ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped.

I. The Sacrament is a Sign of Love ; and something more, of Charity and Agreement amongst Christians. Feasting together, was always so accounted by the Practice of all Nations ; much more in a Religious Manner ; but most of all, when Christians remember their Lord's exceeding great Love (in Dying for them) at his own Table. It cannot, without Injury to our Principles, be supposed, that we bring with us any ill Will, or malicious Intentions, when we meet to praise the Living Father, for Sending his Son ; to adore the Son, for Dying in our behalf ; and to implore the Holy Spirit's Assistance, to make us meet for such Mercy. Our Communion is a manifest Discovery of our Friendship and Charity ; for we own our selves of one and the same Religion, as Members of the same Body, of which Christ is the Head, and as Heirs of the same Promise of Life and Happiness. We are then fed with the same Spiritual Food, drink of the same Divine Cup, and declare by our Actions, that we have the same Hope of Everlasting Glory in us. And such as are so united in Principle and Practice, in Heart and Expectation, may be presum'd to be in perfect Charity one with another ; as they expect the Favour of their Lord, whose Death they celebrate. *But if any Man seem to be contentious, we have no such Custom, neither the Churches of God :* Which are for Peace and Love.

1 Cor. 11. 16.

II. It is not only a Sign, but rather a Sacrament of our Redemption by Christ's Death. It was the Pleasure of the Father, to resolve, that without Shedding of Blood, there should be no Remission, or Pardon of Sin. Whereupon his only Son, our Lord, came in our Flesh, and offer'd himself up as a Sacrifice for the Sins of the World, and thereby obtain'd Eternal Redemption for us. To keep up the Memory of this his Dying for us, he hath instituted and ordain'd the Sacrament of Bread and Wine, to be a Visible Representation of his Body and Blood ; to testify to all Ages, that he has redeemed and purchased us by his own Death, to be his own peculiar People. So that it is plainly a Sacrament of our Redempti-

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on by Christ's Death ; which we may all find, to our great and endless Comfort, would we partake of it as we ought. For if we Receive it rightly, with due Preparation of Heart and Life ; if we worthily approach with true Repentance for Sins past, humble and sincere Resolutions of Living better, a lively Faith in God's Mercy, and thankful Remembrance of his Passion ; we then partake of the Body and Blood of Christ, and are entitled to all the Benefits of his Passion and Mediation. We are bound therefore, for our own Safety and Advantage, to examine our selves, to search our Hearts and Lives ; to repent, amend, and vow all possible Obedience ; that upon our coming to the Holy Table, we may discern by Faith the Lord's Body, and be found worthy Partakers of it ; that we may have Communion in the Body and Blood of Christ, and thro' him obtain Remission of Sins, and live for ever. *This is my Body, which was broken for you : This do in Remembrance of me.*

1 Cor. 11. 24.
the latter part.

III. There is no Change of the Bread and Wine by Transubstantiation. Such Doctrine is not to be proved by Holy Writ ; 'tis repugnant to the plain Words of Scripture ; overthroweth the Nature of a Sacrament ; hath given Occasion to many Superstitions. These are the Reasons, why our Church does not allow of that Monstrous Opinion, so contrary to Sense and Right Reason.

I. This Change of Bread and Wine into the very Body and Blood of Christ, cannot be prov'd by Holy Writ, or out of the Scriptures ; there is no Place of Scripture, that can be alledg'd fairly, to support and maintain the same. For tho' our Lord, upon the Institution of the Sacrament, did say, " Take, eat ; this is " my Body " ; he could not mean, that the Bread in his Hand was that Body, that spake unto them. For how could his Body be in his own Hand, and in their Mouths, and he speak unto them at the same time ? He said at another time, " I am the true Vine " : Will any from thence conclude, that he was a real Vine, with Roots in the Earth, and Branches out of it ? He said also, " I am the Door " into the Sheep-fold : Would any in their Wits conclude, that he was a real Door ? If then such Expressions must be understood as Metaphorical, why should not this be expounded in the same manner ? For when he said, " This is my Body " ; his Meaning is, This signifies, represents, or is the Sacrament of my Body. That as the *Jews* said, " This is the Paschal Lamb ; tho' that was really slain many Years before, when they came out of *Egypt* : So we say, " This is " his Body " ; tho' that was crucified near Seventeen Hundred Years ago : For we intend no more than the *Jews*, that it signifies and represents the Body of Christ. But if we must understand this literally, it follows, that we must understand the Cup literally ; which will appear very strange. For then the Cup must be turn'd into Blood ; which is so absurd, that the Patrons of Transubstantiation will allow the Cup to signify the Wine contained in the Cup, or the Blood contained in the Cup. And if our Saviour spake by a Metaphor concerning the Cup, he might use the same Metaphor concerning

cerning his Body : Both are commanded to be received in Remembrance of him ; which how it can be done when he is present, is past my Understanding. *This do, as oft as ye drink it, in Remembrance of me.*

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1 Cor. 11. 25.
the latter part.

2. This Change is plainly repugnant to the express Words of Scripture. He himself who has instituted this Sacrament, calls the Bread, after it is consecrated, not his Body, but Bread ; and the Cup, not his Blood, but the Cup, by the Mouth of St Paul ; and that the " Eating of this Bread, and Drinking of this Cup, does shew forth the Lord's Death till he come ". He further adds, that " the Bread which we break, is the Communion of the Body of Christ ; " and the Cup which we drink of, is the Communion of his Blood. If therefore we will attend to, and be govern'd by Scripture, 'tis Bread after Consecration, and Wine when poured forth ; and we are bound to call them by the same Names ; for they are no more changed by us, than they were by St. Paul. And if in his Days they were but Sacramental Bread and Wine, they can be no other in ours. Besides, if Bread and Wine do set forth the Lord's Death till he come ; they cannot be changed into the same Body and Blood, they are to set forth ; for then they would be present. And can my Presence set forth my Absence, and my Coming again ? Or can the Presence of Christ's Real Body and Blood, set forth his Presence, till the Real Body of Christ shall come ? The Apostle thought him absent ; and could not imagine, that his Presence should set forth his Coming from Heaven. His Body is not to return to the Earth, " till the Last Day, until the Time of Restitution of all Things ". Till then, we must remember it in the Sacrament ; but may not expect it under the Accidents of Bread and Wine ; unless it can be in Heaven, and Earth, and in Ten Thousand Places at one and the same Time. This is plainly repugnant to the Holy Scripture. *And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you ; whom the Heavens must receive, until the Times of Restitution of all Things : Which God hath spoken by the Mouth of all his Holy Prophets, since the World began.*

Ast. 3. 20, 21.

3. This Change overthroweth the Nature of a Sacrament : For that is an Outward and Visible Representation of the Thing signified. But what External Representation can there be, of that which is present ? The Accidents are nothing but External Appearances ; and if they remain without their Substances, they cannot pass for Representations of the Body and Blood of Christ, which lies conceal'd under those Accidents, which seem to us to be no other than Bread and Wine. If therefore Transubstantiation were true, it must destroy the Nature of the Sacrament. For then it will follow, that the Body and Blood of Christ, do represent the Body and Blood of Christ ; or that Accidents of Bread and Wine, must pass for Bread and Wine ; which, if taken either way, destroys the Nature of a Sacrament, which is the Representation of something signified thereby, and is celebrated in Remembrance of something done

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done before, and display'd to view under proper Representations.

4. Transubstantiation hath given an Occasion to many Superstitions. For when Men were possess'd with a firm Belief, that the Body and Blood of Christ were really, and substantially under the Accidents of Bread and Wine; they began to look upon it as a Sacrifice, and not a Commemoration of a Sacrifice; and pretended, that it was beneficial for the Quick and the Dead, and called it the Sacrifice of the Mass; they elevated it for the People to worship, they reserv'd it for many Uses, and laid the Foundation of those many Superstitions relating to it in the Roman Church.

IV. We partake of the Body and Blood of Christ, at this Sacrament, in a Spiritual Manner: It is given, taken, and received Spiritually; and the Means whereby we receive it, is Faith. We cannot think that our Lord would set apart such proper Representations, to convey nothing to us; or that he would command us to receive the Signs, and not confer the Things signified to us. When therefore our Church denies the Presence of the real and substantial Body and Blood of Christ, made up of Flesh, Bones, Veins, and Nerves; She instructs us to believe, that "the Body and Blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the Faithful in the Lord's Supper"; and that those that come duly prepared, and receive rightly and worthily, are Spiritually Partakers of his Body and Blood; that they become one with Christ, and Christ with them; and that they really and truly partake of the Benefits and Fruits of his Passion, as living Members of his Body; as he is the Bread of Life, they are then nourished, strengthened, and supported by him; they receive him by Faith, by Faith they feed upon him; and the divine Life that is begun in their Souls, is in a Spiritual Manner, upheld and carried on in them. So that we profess and own a Real Spiritual Presence of him, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; but disown and deny that Corporeal Presence of the Body and Blood, Flesh and Bones of Christ: For whereas now we feed upon him by Faith with Thanksgiving, we should then feed upon him with our Teeth, and devour the Lord that bought us. *Who so eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood, hath eternal Life, and I will raise him up at the last Day: For my Flesh is meat indeed, and my Blood is drink indeed.*

Joh. 6. 54, 55.

V. This Holy Sacrament was not appointed for a Shew, or a Piece of Pageantry; was not by Christ's Ordinance to be reserv'd, carried about, lifted up; he expressly commands, that it should be eaten and drunk in Remembrance of him; and therefore they do more than is commanded, who reserve it ready consecrated for the Use of the Sick, who carry it about in Pomp under a Canopy of State, to be gazed, and wondered at; and who worship it with the same Adoration that they would pay to Christ himself. Our Saviour's

our's Command should be our Rule, and his express Words dearer to us, than the Traditions of Men. To dismiss this Argument, either Transubstantiation, which gives an Occasion to all this Pageantry, is true or false : If true, it is but reasonable, that one should see, feel, and taste, that very Body and Blood, which is pretended Present, which never any Man upon Earth hath done ; If false, as no doubt it is, then those that invite the People to worship, and to adore, worship no other than Bread and Wine for Christ himself, which can be no other than Idolatry. Whereas St. John saith, *Little Children, keep your selves from Idols.*

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1 Joh. 5. 21.

From this Consideration of the Article, ye may see the Faithfulness of our Church ; The Obligation that is upon all of us to receive this Sacrament, and the particular Care we should take to receive it worthily.

1. The Faithfulness of our Church is remarkable. For she gives you the true Account of the Lord's Supper, freed from the monstrous Absurdities of Transubstantiation, and the superstitious Fancies of Rome : She informs you what Christ hath made it, and how he commands you to use it ; and tells you, that 'tis not only a Sign of your mutual Love, but of your Redemption by Christ Jesus ; and that as ye love your Souls, and desire to enjoy that Salvation he hath purchased, ye are bound to prepare for, and come to it : Your Lord, who died for you all, commands all to eat of that Bread ; and says, " Drink ye all of this", and excuses none. Ye had need be well advis'd therefore, lest ye turn away from the Holy Commandment, and disobey him, who died for you, and expects so much Love and Gratitude from you, as to remember him in his own Way ; for he hath said, " He that denieth me before Men, " him will I deny before my Father which is Heaven ". As therefore our Church is faithful to prepare the Sacrament for you, according to Christ's Institution, and to put you in Mind of these Things, it will be upon your Peril, if ye turn away from it, or neglect the same. It would be a very unwelcome Resolution, if it should be taken up against some of us, as it was against others. *I say unto you, That none of those Men that were bidden, shall taste of my Supper.*

2. There is an Obligation upon us all to receive this Sacrament : Upon all that are come to Years of Discretion, and are capable of examining themselves ; for we are baptiz'd and receiv'd into Christ's Church ; we are his Servants, and under his Government ; we are subject to his Laws and Gospel ; we have covenanted with him to be his Faithful Servants, and have vow'd and promis'd all Obedience to him ; and therefore are as much bound to receive this Sacrament, as to perform any other Duty for his Sake, or in Obedience to him. And if some of us are not worthy, we shall find (would we search into the Cause) that the Fault lies at our own Doors, and can be charged upon no other. For what can be the Reason that we do not repent, and get ready, but our own Neglect, or our own Presumption ? We will not

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Matt. 25. 3.

not be as dutiful, as we are commanded; and will not qualify our selves by holy Living, as we have promised; and that is the true Reason why we are not fit to come when invited. And the Fault is our own, that we are not ready; we shall at last, when it may be too late, lay it upon our selves, and bear our Punishment. I wish none may prove the foolish Virgins. *They that were foolish, took their Lamps, and took no Oil with them,*

3. When we have prepared for this Sacrament, we should take particular Care to receive it worthily. We should especially mind what we are doing, keep our Hearts intent upon the Action, and with the sincerest Devotion receive and eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup. We should then exercise our Faith, enlarge our Charity, adore the divine Goodness, praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and devote our selves to the Service of Christ. So doing, we may receive it with Comfort, reflect upon it with Peace, and go forth, the Lord strengthening us, with Resolution for his Service. "For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our Guide unto Death".

ARTI-

ARTICLE XXIX.

I COR. XI. 29.

For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh (his own) Damnation to himself.

IT is with the Christian Society as with others; the Evil will sometimes presume to concern themselves in the most Solemn and Myste-
rious Parts of Worship: And either for the Sake of Re-
putation, or Interest, or to remove some Terrors of Mind, or oblige
some particular Imagination, will approach the Table of the Lord,
and eat and drink their own Destruction. **For he that eateth
and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh (his own)
Damnation to himself.**

Which shews us the Sense of the Twenty Ninth Article, which
says, "The Wicked, and such as be void of a lively Faith, although
"they do carnally and visibly press with their Teeth (as St. *Augu-*
"stin saith) the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ; yet
"in no wise are they Partakers of Christ, but rather to their Con-
"demnation do eat and drink the Sign or Sacrament of so great a
"Thing". Let us observe,

- I. That the Wicked sometimes partake of the outward Ele-
ments. The Wicked, and such as be void of a lively Faith,
do carnally and visibly press with their Teeth; as St. *Augu-*
"stin saith, the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of
Christ.
- II. They do not receive worthily, or partake of the Body
and Blood of Christ; in no wise are they Partakers of
Christ.
- III. They but eat and drink the Sacramental Representations;
rather to their Condemnation do they eat and drink the Sign or
Sacrament of so great a Thing.

I. The Wicked do sometimes partake of the outward Elements,
with great Hazard and Presumption.

i. The Wicked may sometimes be so daring and bold as to par-
take of the Sacrament, and to press carnally and visibly with their
Teeth, the Representations of the Body and Blood of Christ. For
as all are invited to come, if such will appear there in an unworthy
Manner, 'tis upon their Peril; neither God nor Man will hinder
C c them:

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Eph. 5. 27.

them : God does not think fit to change by a Miracle those that are over-confident in their Approach, or to strike them dead as he did the *Israelites*, whilst the Heavenly Food was in their Mouths ; nor can Man search the Heart, or discern the secret Intentions of those that appear Devout, and prevent the Approach of such as Dissemble with God, if they will come without their Wedding Garment, and that Temper and Grace that is necessary for a worthy Participation ; they are oftentimes permitted to proceed, and to increase their Guilt by their Presumption. Sufficient Means are provided to prevent the Mischief, and frequent Caveats are put in to warn them ; and if after all they will come, neither God nor Man can be reflected upon, or blamed on their Account : So long as Good and Evil are allowed to dwell together, and Goats and Sheep mix in the same Fold ; so long as this is a trying State, and “ the Heart of Man is deceitful, and desperately wicked”, there will be some unworthy Communicants, and it will not be in the Power of Man to prevent it. There can be no Society of Believers upon Earth, that is unmix’d or undefiled : That Privilege is reserved for the future State, when the Evil shall be set apart by themselves, and the Good shall be for ever with the Lord, not having Spot or Wrinkle, as St. Paul says : *That he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such Thing, but that it should be Holy, and without Blamish.*

2 Cor. 10. 12.

2. They are very presumptuous, and run a vast Hazard in so doing. They pretend they may partake as well as others ; and so they might, would they take the same Course : But to come merely by Imitation, is wrong ; for we are not obliged to examine others, but our selves ; not their Hearts and Lives, but our own. And if some come, which the Wicked fancy to be as bad as themselves, that can be no excuse of their Presumption ; they must answer to the Lord of all for themselves notwithstanding. We must not govern our selves in this Case by Comparison, but Self-Examination ; not by comparing our selves with others, but with the Word of God ; and may not connive at any willful Sin, or spare any Vice, which we imagine others are guilty of, but look to our own Ways, and narrowly inspect our own Actions. For otherwise we presume and endanger our own Souls. *For we dare not make our selves of the Number, or compare our selves with some that commend themselves ; but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.*

H. The Wicked do not receive worthily, or partake of Christ, being void of a lively Faith, which should be the Instrument of receiving him, and wanting that Holy Temper and Disposition, which Christ requires, by which we may have Union and Communion with him.

I. The Wicked do not receive worthily, because they want that lively Faith, by which they should receive Christ, and partake of the

the Merits of his Passion: They do not believe in earnest in him, or depend upon him for Salvation; and therefore, when they come, they partake of no more than the Sacramental Representations, and but press the Bread with their Teeth, and drink of the Cup, as if they were but Earthly Food and Drink. If indeed Christ were under the Accidents of Bread and Wine, with his Real Body, Blood, Flesh, and Bones; then it would follow, that as the Wicked partake of the Sacramental Signs, so they partake of Christ; and by Eating the Bread, and Drinking the Cup, they eat his Body, and drink his Blood. But then it will follow also, that a Moule may eat the Body, and a Fly may sip of the Blood of Christ: For they eat and drink, as the Wicked, without any Apprehension that their Lord is there. Now this is so great a Disparagement to the Lord of Heaven, and was thought so dishonourable by Mr. Gage to Christian Religion, that he turn'd Protestant upon it. For we may be sure he is not willing, that a Moule should eat of his Body, which died for the Souls of Men; or that a Fly should sip of his Blood, which was shed for the Sins of the World. The Wicked then can eat and drink no more than the External Representations; the Body and Blood of Christ being sacramentally annex'd to the Signs, for their Benefit only, who come with Faith, and spiritually discern the Lord's Body. Should the Wicked cease to be wicked, and come with a lively Faith in God's Mercy thro' Christ, and unfeigned Reformation, they might spiritually eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup. But so long as they are without Faith, and look no further than the World, they are not able to receive the Spiritual Benefits of Christ's Passion into their Souls: They partake of the Sacramental Signs, but the Things signified are not discerned, or received by them. They do not perform, what is given in Command: *Do this in Remembrance of me.*

1 Cor. 11. 15,
the latter part.

2. They want that Temper and Disposition requir'd by Christ, by which they may have Union and Communion with him. They are guided by Sense, and their Hearts are overwhelmed with Sin, and set upon their Lusts; and they are in no meet Capacity to remember a Saviour, or to praise God for him. 'Tis a Burthen to them to be serious; a Pain to be devout. They have an Aversion to Goodness, and a Dislike to hearty Piety: And however they disguise their Intentions, when they come to the Table of the Lord, they neither love him, nor his Service; and neither intend to reform, nor to walk worthy of him. This Temper of the Wicked disables them for any other Christian Duty, as well as the Sacrament: They are as unfit to Pray, as to come to the Sacrament; and are as unlikely to get any Good by Hearing the Word, as by Supplication. For all that such pretend to do in Religion, turns into an Abomination; their Hearts are not right in the Sight of God, their Intentions are evil, and their Inclinations are bias'd that way, and till they are changed and reform'd, they will be neither fit to hear the Word, nor pray; neither prepared to Receive the Sacrament, nor to dye; neither ready to be judg'd, nor to receive

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Prov. 15. 8, 9.

their Sentence. *The Sacrifices of the Wicked are an Abomination unto the Lord. — The Way of the Wicked is an Abomination unto the Lord.*

III. They but eat and drink the Sacrament of so Great a Thing to their own Condemnation. But to give you a clear Apprehension of this, and that ye may not misunderstand it, and prejudice your own Souls by it; I will show, That it is but just and fit, that such Presumptuous Wicked Men should smart for it; that God intends to shew Mercy by this Judgment; and that such as are under it, are left sometimes to Consideration; that they may repent, and come more prepared afterwards.

1. It is but just and fit, that such Presumptuous Wicked Men, who come unprepared to the Sacrament, should smart for it: For they cast a Slight upon God's Authority, defile his Sanctuary, abuse the Holy Feast, injure their own Souls, encourage themselves in Wickedness, and (as it may happen) become Precedents and Examples for others to follow. Nay, they vilifie the Body and Blood of Christ, which are there represented, "they (as it were) trample under foot the Blood of the Covenant, despise the Lord that bought them, crucify him afresh, and [do what lies in them to] put him to an open Shame". They misrepresent his Holy Religion, as if it allow'd of their Vicious Practices: They "do De-
spite to the Spirit of Grace", as if that encouraged Prophaneness and Hypocrisy; and would possess the World, as if the Lord, who came "to save us from our Sins", had publish'd a Method, how we might go on and prosper in them. Whereas the Behaviour of those that make so bold with the Lord's Table, is chargeable with these Consequences, it is consistent with the Justice of the Divine Government, under the Gospel, to "punish for these Things": For St. Paul says expressly, *That whosoever shall eat this Bread, and drink this Cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord.*

1 Cor. 11. 27.

2. Tho' this Sin is very provoking, God shews Mercy in his Judgment upon them. For tho' our Version is, that they eat and drink their own Damnation; it may be translated, they eat and drink their own Judgment. They are self-condemn'd in what they do, and expose themselves wilfully to the Severity and Judgment of God: Yet he inflicts it with so much Tendernefs, that they may see his Kindness in the Correction, and his Goodness in their Punishment. For that Damnation, or Judgment, that was inflicted upon the *Corinthians*, when they had so shamefully abused the Sacrament, (when some were drunken at it) was not the Damnation of Eternal Death, in Hell-fire; but a Temporal Punishment, a Condemnation to Sorrow and Affliction here. Some were condemn'd to Sickness, some to great Weaknesses, and some indeed to Loss of Life. And all this Punishment, which goes by the terrible Name of Damnation, was intended as a particular Mercy to them, and a

Check

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Check upon them; that those that survived, should pay more Reverence to the Sacrament, and approach it with more Sobriety and Devotion; that they might come with due Preparation, in a Condition to remember their Lord, as Lord, to "discern his Body," and to shew forth his Death till he come. And that this is the true Meaning of the Word Damnation, there used, St. Paul teaches you: *For this Cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many are fallen asleep.* Because you eat and drink your own Damnation, ye find the Damnation upon you; many of you are now under it, and are weak and sickly upon it: And that they might acknowledge God's Compassion to their Souls, in this Correction; and that he was so far from bringing eternal Damnation upon them, that he intended thereby to prevent it, and to secure them from being damned with the World; he adds, *But when we are judged, (or thought worthy of Correction) we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the World.*

1 Cor. II. 30.

1 Cor. II. 32.

3. Such as have come unworthily, and have exposed themselves to the Judgment of God, may repent, and prepare to come hereafter in a more worthy Manner. If they see into their Fault, and correct it; if they, being corrected, set their Souls in better Order; if they are true Penitents, have a lively Faith in God's Mercy, and remember the Death of Christ with Thankfulness; they may be accepted at last, Receive worthily, and secure their Salvation. For as it is apparent, that God corrects them in Mercy, intends to bring them to a sound Mind, that they may judge themselves; as he gives them Time in their Weaknesses and Sickneses, to examine and judge themselves, and to prepare that which is necessary; as he chastens them, that they may not be condemned with the World; there is no doubt to be made, but that when they appear before him with humble and penitent Hearts, he will accept, and embrace them with the Prodigal Son, and (like a Kind and Affectionate Father) feed them at his own Table, and nourish them up to Eternal Life. For if we do our Part, God is very ready and forward to do his: If we do examine and judge our selves as we ought, he will spare us, as a Man doth his own Son, and will not bring his Displeasure upon us. And St. Paul expressly says, *If we would judge our selves, we should not be judged.* Which signifies thus much; That if we will faithfully examine our own Souls, before we come to that Table, and judge our selves according to his Word, he will not judge, or correct us, but allow us all the Benefits of his Son's Passion, that our Spirits may be saved in the Day of the Lord. But if we will not be at the Pains of judging our selves, he in Mercy judges us, and corrects us, *that we may not be condemned with the World.*

1 Cor. II. 31.

This Account of the Article may, with Reason, terrify the Profane, but should not in the least discourage the Sincere and Humble, or leave any Terror upon them; since the Damnation here threaten'd, is but the Judgment of Condemnation to Temporal Punishment; unless Men are obstinate in Sin, and hate to be reformed;

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formed; and then indeed that which is Temporal, may become Eternal.

1. This Account may with Reason terrify the Wicked and Profane, and keep them from coming to the Lord's Table. For should they go thither, they but provoke and offend the more. Can they remember his Death with Thankfulness, who crucify him afresh with their Sins, and hate to be reformed? Or can they promise themselves any Comfort there, who are purposed to destroy him? Will God connive at such palpable Presumption? Or their Lord accept of that which is offered in Dissimulation? Such wicked Men are unhappy in all Respects, and unless they reform, will be miserable: They are neither fit to live, nor prepared to die; neither fit to be judged, nor ready for their Doom. If they live, they continue in Sin, add Sin to Sin, increase their Guilt, which is too great already, and hasten their Damnation: If they die, they die in their Sins, carry the same wicked Temper with them, and will go into everlasting Punishment, to suffer for their Misdeeds. They are unhappy in an high Degree; for if they continue in Sin, that which does others good, will do them none; and that which they call Good is Evil, and most pernicious to them: Whereas others pray, and are heard, these call, and are not answer'd; whereas others are pitied, relieved, and blessed; these are not succoured or rescued, but are left under their Miseries. And whereas others are instructed by the Word, and learn the Fear of the Lord, these remain stupid and hardened under it; or if awakened, soon sink down into their Mire and Filth; and when others meet their Lord, and partake of his Body and Blood, they rashly take the Signs, and eat and drink their own Damnation. So that the Wicked are miserable upon all Accounts, and if they do not repent and return to the Lord, it had been better for them, if they had never been born, and had never heard of Jesus Christ; and as there is no Peace for them here, so no Safety for them hereafter, unless they return and live in the Fear of the Lord; then their Prayers will be heard, and their Participation of the Sacrament will prove Salutary. I may be allowed to say thus much, when Ezekiel says in the Name of the Lord; *Cast away from you all your Transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed, and make you a new Heart, and a new Spirit; for why will ye die, O House of Israel? For I have no Pleasure in the Death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn your selves, and live ye.*

Ezek. 18. 31,
32.

2. This should not discourage those that are sincere and humble, from doing their Duty, and waiting upon God at his own Table: For he is gracious and merciful, ready to forgive and accept us; and declares, That if we faithfully judge our selves, we shall not be judged by him; and though he informs us, that unworthy Communicants eat and drink their own Damnation; he lets us know that this is but a temporal Correction, in order to bring them to himself; so that none of us may frighten our selves with the dread of it. For if we are upright before him, and approach his Presence with Faith

Faith and Repentance, we shall be worthy Partakers of his Son's Passion, and shall eat and drink our own Salvation and Happiness. For he will make much of those that truly fear him, and are faithful to his Covenant. Of all Men living, they have the least Reason to be jealous of his Love, or suspicious of his Favour; they need not entertain any Doubts or Fears of his gracious Intentions towards them: For whom he loveth, he loveth to the end. If the Sincere pray, he will hear them; when they attend to his Word, he will guide them by it; and when they come to his Table, he will manifest himself to them, feed them with the Bread of Life, and engages to raise them up at the last Day. To conclude, If ye are in a sinful Course, return with Speed, that God may be reconciled: If ye are sincere and pious, go on in your Duty, and never torment your selves with unreasonable Fears. For God loveth the Upright, and they have most Cause to rejoice before him; he will be their Refuge and Salvation. *Whoso offereth Praise, glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his Conversation right, will I shew the Salvation of God.*

Psal. 50. 23;

I. The Right the People have to the Cup of the Lord: It is not to be denied to Lay-people.
II. Christ hath ordained and commanded, that both Parts of the Supper should be ministered to all Christian People.
III. The Right the People have to the Cup of the Lord, is to be denied them: They are not Partakers of that, which the great Shepherd hath appointed for the support of their Faith, and their Fellowship in an Holy Communion. And his not let in the power of any Minister of the Gospel, or any Assembly made up of such, to deprive them of any Part of that, which their Saviour hath bestowed upon them. The Minister of the Gospel should feed the Sheep with proper Food in due season, and may not drive them from the Water of Life, or hinder them when they would fill themselves with it. And therefore ought to be proved, that our Lord hath designed that Lay-people should not drink at his Supper, but be denied the Cup, they have a Right to.

ARTICLE XXX.

MATT. XXVI. 27.

And he took the Cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it.

TIS not for private Subjects to alter the Laws of a Land, nor for a powerful Man to supersede the Commands of his Prince ; nor may a Bishop cancel the least Law of our Lord, nor the highest Prelate, though called a Pope, make void the least Part of the Institutions of Jesus. What he enacts must remain in Force, till he revokes it ; and what he hath established to be observed till he comes, must continue to the End of the World. 'Tis upon this Account that the Laity are allowed the Cup at the Sacrament. For, *He took the Cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it.*

Which speaks the Sense of the Thirtieth Article, which declares, that " the Cup of the Lord is not to be deny'd to the Lay-People ; " for both the Parts of the Lord's Sacrament, by Christ's Ordinance " and Commandment, ought to be minister'd to all Christian Men " alike ". Let us consider,

- I. The Right the People have to the Cup of the Lord : It is not to be denied to Lay-People.
- II. Christ hath ordained and commanded, that Both Parts of his Supper should be minister'd to all Christian Men.

I. The Right the People have to the Cup of the Lord, is so good and strong, that it ought not to be denied them. They are Part of the Flock of Christ, the greatest Part by far, and ought to be Partakers of that, which the great Shepherd hath appointed for the Support of their Faith, and their Encouragement in an Holy Life. And 'tis not left in the Power of any Minister of the Gospel, or any Assembly made up of such, to deprive them of any Part of that, which their Saviour hath bestowed upon them. The Ministers of the Gospel are to feed the Sheep with proper Food in due Season, and may not drive them from the Water of Life, or hinder them when they would fill themselves with it. And therefore unless it could be proved, that our Lord design'd that his Lay-Disciples should not drink at his Supper, but be deny'd the Cup, they have a Right to drink

drink of it for their Spiritual Good, and are bound to prepare themselves for it. For they are subject to his Laws, and no Power upon Earth can excuse them from Obedience. The whole Strefs of this Truth lies in this, Whether Christ intended and commanded that the Laity should drink of the Cup, or not? For if it appears by his own Institution, that he enjoins them to drink of it, their Right is undoubted, and no Power upon Earth can deny it: For there is no less Authority required to take it from them, than that which at first granted it to them; and as Christ himself laid the Command upon them, no other than Christ can cancel the Obligation, or make void their Duty: For he is Lord of the House, and Supreme Governor in his Church; he hath all Power in Heaven and Earth; he openeth and no Man shutteth, and he shutteth and no Man openeth. And all the Combination of Men in Councils, or elsewhere, cannot deprive him of his Regal Power, or exempt the Laity from his Jurisdiction: As he hath given no Power to Men to reverse what he hath established, the Laity remain obliged to be obedient, and will be so to the End of the World; though their Guides should insinuate the contrary, and banish them from their Lord's Table; and as they have taken away the Cup, they should take away the Bread also. For the same Usurpation that hath been bold enough to take the Cup from them, may in time become more daring, and with as much Justice, drive them from the whole Communion. Our Lord's Authority is undeniable. *For he must reign till he hath put all Enemies under his Feet; the last Enemy that shall be destroyed, is Death.* And till then his Ordinances will be in Force, and there will be no altering of them.

1 Cor. 15.
25, 26.

II. Both Parts of the Sacrament, according to Christ's Ordinance and Commandment, should be minister'd to all Christian Men: His Commandment is plain, "Drink ye all of this". And it was thought so necessary for all that were then present, that our Lord was pleas'd with his own Hands to take the Cup, and give it to his Disciples; and in Obedience to him, the Apostles delivered the Cup to all that communicated with them; as is evident from the Case of the *Corinthians*: For though they profaned the Communion to an high Degree, and betrayed a loose and sensual Spirit, yet it is notorious from thence, that they all drank of the Cup: Some indeed too freely; for otherwise, how was it possible for them to be drunken at it. And as the Abuse is a sufficient Proof, that all the Communicants in the Apostles Times drank of the Cup, we may conclude from thence, that they deprived none of it, but left it as free for the Laity to drink of it, as our Saviour had left it to them. And therefore if our Saviour's Command may be allowed to be in Force, and the Practice of the Apostles conformable to that Command may be produc'd for Imitation; the Right which the Laity hath to the Cup is as good as ever it was, and it is unreasonable to deny it to any Person, that is duly qualified for it. According to the Sense of the Apostles, the Bread was a Communion of the Body of Christ, and the Cup a Communion of his Blood. And as they are thus distinctly explain'd,

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and

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and a particular Communion allotted to either of them, it seems to be very unkind to allow the Laity one Part of Christ, and to deny them the other; to grant them Communion in the Bread, and of the Body of Christ, and to deprive them of the Cup, and of the Blood of Christ. For his Blood was as well shed in their Behalf, as his Body was crucified; and their Souls stand in as much need of his Blood, as of his Body for the Remission of Sins, and the Assistance of Grace. And as these cannot be without Danger separated in their Application to the Soul, they may not be separated in the Ministration; for Christ is not divided, his Body and Blood were both made an Offering for Sin, and purchased Redemption for us; his Body was given for every Christian, and his Blood was shed for every Soul; and for that Reason every one ought to partake of his Body and Blood for their Salvation. For it is our Saviour's Design that all should come unto him, and find Rest for their Souls.

1 Tim. 2. 4. *Who will have all Men to be saved, and come unto the Knowledge of the Truth.* Whereas then the Authority, which ordained the Use of the Sacrament, hath granted the Cup to the Laity, and they are bound to drink of it; to remove any Scruples that may arise about it, I will examine the Arguments, by which the Laity are supposed to be justly deprived of the Cup, and observe how conclusive they may be in the Sight of God. And in this Respect it is said, That our Saviour gave Commandment to the Apostles only to drink of the Cup, there being no other then present; That the Church can dispense with this, and allow the Laity the Bread only; and that the Bread being turned into the Body of Christ, the Laity receive the Blood with the Bread, by way of Concomitancy. I think this is the most that can be said in Defence of the Refusal of the Cup to the Laity, which carries any Appearance of Strength. I shall examine them apart, and shew you the Insufficiency of every one, or of all together to support such a Charge.

1. It is said, our Saviour gave the Commandment to the Apostles only, there being then no other present; and consequently his Design was, that the Priests should drink of the Cup, and no other. To this I reply, That allowing there were no other than the Apostles present with him, when he administered the Sacrament in his own Person, yet he made it an Ordinance for the whole Church, according to his express Command, as St. Paul delivers it to the *Corinthians*, and the People as well as Ministers are under the same Obligation: And were this Reason good, the Bread might with as much Pretence, be denied the Laity as the Cup; for if they are not permitted to drink of the Cup, because there was no Laity present; then for the same Reason, the Laity may not eat of the Bread. And thus the Sacrament, which was appointed for the Use of the whole Church, may be monopoliz'd and turn'd to the peculiar Use of the Priests, there being full as much Reason to deprive the Laity of the Bread, as of the Cup. But if they can out of meer Shame allow the Laity the Bread, who had no Representatives, when our Lord administer'd it; they may from meer Conviction yield up the Cup

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Cup to them, being ordained by our Lord for the Benefit of both Ministers and People. And therefore, tho' there were none but Apostles present at the first Celebration, it concerned all that then were, or afterwards should become Christians, and who believed they might obtain Remission of Sins by the Blood of Jesus, to partake of both Kinds, and to apply to themselves the Merits of his Body and Blood. And however Pretences are started to defend an Abuse, the Priests have no Authority to administer the Sacrament by Halves to the People, or to apply it to themselves in a way quite different from our Saviour's Institution. *He took the Cup, and said, This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in Remembrance of me.*

1 Cor. II. 25.

2. It is pretended, that the Church can dispense with this Institution, and bar the Laity from the Cup: That She has an Authority, upon weighty Causes, and good and mature Consideration, to take the Cup from them. To this I return, That the Church can have no Authority, but from Christ; and we know of no Grants of his made over to the Church, but in his Word. If then the Text can be produc'd, in which this Power is given, the Controversy shall be at an End. But there is no such Grant in his Word, but rather the contrary: For the Institution is to remain in full Force and Power to the End of the World, or till our Lord comes to Judgment. And what Power upon Earth can pretend to an Authority, of Altering and Changing that, which is to continue in full Force, according to our Lord's Appointment, to the Last Day? Can any, in his House and Church, in his Name, and by his Commission, assume an Authority to change his Laws, or to dispense with them, without Offence or Presumption? Or, if some are so topping and bold; who can, without Scruple, venture his Soul upon such Decisions, which so manifestly break, and lay aside the Commandment of God, and set up and ordain the Determination of Man in the Room of it? If it were written any where, that the Church, for manifest and weighty Reasons, might change the Sacraments; we might acquiesce in that, which the Church determines in this Case: But because we no where find such a Superlative Power granted to her, but that She is "the Pillar and Ground of Truth", and oblig'd to preserve, and declare it to all succeeding Generations; it can be no less than a plain Violation of the Institution of our Saviour, to deny the People any Part of a Sacrament. Admit but such a Paramount Power as this, and in time we may be depriv'd of our Saviour's Sacraments, and may have Seven other, nay, Seven Hundred set up in their Room. For the same Ecclesiastical Discretion that has alter'd one Part, may alter the whole, annull all, and appoint some other, as more proper and edifying. So dangerous is it, to recede in the least from that which our Saviour has commanded. These Things are worthy of Consideration, that we may know how to acquit our selves in the Church of Christ. *That thou may'st know, how thou oughtest to behave thy self in the House of God, which is the Church of the Living God, the Pillar and Ground of the Truth.*

1 Tim. 3. 15.

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3. To salve all the Difficulty, it is added, That there is no need of the Cup ; for the Laity receive the Blood by way of Concomitancy, because they receive the Real Body of Christ. But this is a mere Evasion ; for it supposes that Transubstantiation is true, and that the Bread is really turned into the Body of Christ. So that if Transubstantiation is false, there can be no Blood by Concomitancy, and the Laity ought notwithstanding to drink of the Cup. But allowing Blood in the Bread ; how can it be a Bloodless Sacrifice, as is maintain'd by those that maintain Transubstantiation ? For it appears very hard to understand, that there should be Blood in that which was Bread for the Laity, and no Blood for the Sacrifice. But besides, if the Laity receive Blood with the Bread, and must eat and drink according to our Saviour's Institution ; then it will undeniably follow, that Eating is Drinking, and that Drinking is Eating : For then the Laity drink the Blood, when they eat the Bread ; and eat the Bread, when they drink the Blood. And this being one and the same individual Act, Eating must be Drinking, and Drinking must be Eating ; which is absurd in it self, and quite contrary to our Saviour's Institution ; for he commands us to Eat at one time, and to Drink at another. And certainly, had he intended we should take but the Bread, he needed not have appointed Two distinct Acts for the Commemoration of his Death, which are so artificially combin'd now-a-days into one. But I question very much, whether this Notion of Concomitancy is really admitted, since the Priests themselves will not trust to it. For if their Doctrine were true, the Bread which they eat, has as much Blood in it, as the Laity find in theirs ; and They might as well eat and drink that way, as These. As we have Reason on our Side in this Point, we have the best Antiquity also. For St. Cyprian owns in his Time, That the Cup was administer'd, *Plebi*, to the Common People ; and adds, That we may not start in the least from the Precepts of the Gospel ; and that the Disciples ought to observe and do the very same, which their Master taught and did. And Aquinas is so ingenuous, as to own, that the Custom of delivering the Cup to the Laity, continued in divers Churches, from the Apostles Time down to his, for the Space of One Thousand Three Hundred Years. And if he confesses thus much, we may be sure it ought not to have been chang'd to this Day : For it must be safest for us, to keep to the Apostolical Practice, as most agreeable to the Mind of Christ. *Those Things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do ; and the God of Peace shall be with you.*

Phil. 4. 9.

By this Article, we may see into the Faithfulness of our Church, and our own inexcusable Neglect.

1. The Faithfulness of our Church is highly to be valued, as She maintains the Right of the Laity against Innovators, and gives them the Cup of Blessing to drink. Far be it from her to connive at Popish Principles, or to encourage the Practice of Roman Priests, who deny the Cup to the Laity. She declares against such Innovations ; and allows all in her Communion, Men and Women, to

drink of that Cup, by which the Blood of their Lord, which was shed for them, is remember'd ; and invites, exhorts, and encourages all of Age, to come and partake of it. As the Lord has died for all, and excepted none out of his Gracious Promise ; She is willing that all should know it ; all should believe, embrace, and hold fast that Truth, and partake of the Sacramental Signs, by which it is conveyed to their Souls. By this ye may be satisfy'd, that those are scandalous Reflections, that are without Cause cast upon her, by which She is represented by designing Men as Popishly inclin'd, and her Ministers as Papists in their Hearts : For She, upon all Occasions, asserts the Apostolical Practice against Popish Innovations ; and we subscribe to such Assertions, and do all that is reasonable to satisfy an incredulous World, that we are from the Heart against the Roman Church, and abhor her Principles. Nay, I will add, We are greater Enemies to her than those that dissent from us ; and that we oppose her upon Grounds truly Primitive and Apostolical ; which our Enemies, with them, do undermine. As ye know this, ye have Cause to deny the Accusation, when our Church is called Popish ; and vindicate her Clergy, when they are abus'd by those, that delight to misrepresent us to the People. *If any Man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed ; but let him glorify God in this behalf.*

1 Pet. 4. 16.

2. We may see into our own inexcusable Neglect : For whilst our Church reaches the Cup to us, too many of us will not accept it, nor drink of it. We condemn the Roman Church, because She will not allow the Cup to the Laity ; as if we thought it their Right, and their Duty to drink : And yet when our Church blesses the Cup, and begs of you to accept of it at her Hands ; ye turn away from her, as if it did not belong to you. What strange Behaviour is this ? Ye will have the Cup your Right ; and ye will not use that Right. Ye call it your Privilege, to have the Liberty of Drinking ; and when it is come to your Turn to drink, ye betray an Aversion to it. Should our Church deny you the Cup, ye would immediately, and with Reason, cry out against her as Roman : And now She calls upon you to remember your dying Lord, and tells you, 'tis your Right to Receive, and your Duty, and that it is next to Sacrilege to deprive you of it ; ye refuse to come. May God in Mercy open your Eyes, to see into the Grossness of this Neglect ; that ye may devoutly practise what ye profess, and may all eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup ; that our Church may rejoice in such Children, and such Children may be the Glory of our Church, and both Pastors and People may in the End be happy. *The End of all Things is at hand : Be ye therefore sober, and watch unto Prayer.*

1 Pet. 4. 7.

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ARTICLE XXXI.

H E B. X. 14.

By one Offering, he has perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

TH E Divine Justice being incens'd by the Sins of Men, demanded Satisfaction, before a Pardon could be ensur'd. And whereas Guilty Sinners could offer nothing worthy of Acceptance, which might expiate Guilt, and save them from Wrath ; it pleased the Divine Word to become incarnate, and to lay down his Life as a Ransom for us all ; and, **By one Offering, he has perfected for ever them that are sanctified.**

Which sets forth the Sense of the Thirty first Article ; which says, " The Offering of Christ once made, is that Perfect Redemption, Propitiation, and Satisfaction for all the Sins of the whole World, both Original and Actual ; and there is none other Satisfaction for Sin, but that alone. Wherefore the Sacrifices of Masses, in the which it was commonly said, that the Priests did offer Christ for the Quick and the Dead, to have Remission of Pain and Guilt, were blasphemous Fables, and dangerous Deceits ". In which we may consider,

I. The Perfection of Christ's Sacrifice : The Offering of Christ once made, is that Perfect Redemption, Propitiation, and Satisfaction, for all the Sins of the whole World, both Original and Actual ; and there is none other Satisfaction for Sin, but that alone.

II. The Insufficiency of Mass-Sacrifices : Wherefore the Sacrifices of Masses, in the which it was commonly said, that the Priests did offer Christ for the Quick and the Dead, to have Remission of Pain and Guilt, were blasphemous Fables, and dangerous Deceits.

I. The Perfection of Christ's Sacrifice, made upon the Cross, appears in that Perfect Redemption he has wrought, Compleat Propitiation he hath made, and Entire Satisfaction he hath given to the Divine Justice ; by which he hath purchased Remission, or Pardon of all the Sins of the World, both Original and Actual, for all those that truly Repent, firmly Believe, and constantly Obey him : For " who-soever believeth in him, shall not perish, but have Everlasting Life ". This Perfection will appear the more manifest, if we consider what the Scripture says of it ; the Excellency of the Person that made the Sacrifice ; and the End that he immediately obtain'd by it.

i. The

1. The Scripture publisheth the Perfection of the Sacrifice Christ made, declaring, "That by his own Blood he hath obtained Eternal Redemption for us, and that he hath redeem'd us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us; that he saveth us from the Power of Satan, and hath restored us to the Perfect Liberty of the Sons of God; and that by one Offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified; that he need not appear often to remove the Divine Displeasure; that he did it once so effectually, and to that Satisfaction of his Father, that he is willing to be reconciled to Sinners, to be their Father, and to give them the Blessing of Children". So that the Scripture speaks of this Sacrifice, as compleat in all Respects, and defective in nothing; as that which at once wrought Deliverance for us, and is to remain in Force to all Eternity, without any Variation or Change: By which Sinners shall not only be pardon'd, but accepted, not only received into Favour, but glorified and raised to the Highest Happiness and Peace. *Christ also hath once suffered for Sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God, and we might be happy.*

1 Pet. 3. 18.

2. The Excellency of his Person sets forth the Excellency of the Sacrifice. For as he was innocent to Perfection, and without Blemish, being God and Man in one Person; the Offering of himself must be a perfect Offering, such as may answer the Demands of Justice, and expiate for Sinners; for there could be no Defect in that Sacrifice, which is without Blemish, and without Spot; which the Father consents to accept, and which by Agreement was to expiate the Sins of all. By such Blood, so Innocent, and so Meritorious, we are expiated and freed from our Guilt, and purified for the Divine Presence. God hath set forth his Son to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood: "He is the Propitiation for our Sins, and not for our Sins only, but for the Sins of the whole World. For if the Blood of Beasts (by the particular Pleasure of God) did expiate", when sacrific'd in a typical and civil Manner; much more by his own Appointment did the Blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God, Perfect God and Perfect Man, expiate for Sin, when it was shed in our Behalf, and offered to the Father for an Atonement. For the Blood of Beasts could have no Worth of its own, and could expiate no farther, than as the Divine Goodness admitted. But the Blood of Christ was valuable in it self, meritorious, and of great Price, and purchased our Reconciliation with the Father's Consent and Approbation, by its own real Excellency and Purity: This the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews owns. *For if the Blood of Bulls, and of Goats, and the Ashes of an Heifer sprinkling the Unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the Flesh; how much more shall the Blood of Christ, who thro' the Eternal Spirit offered himself without Spot to God, purge your Conscience from dead Works to serve the Living God.*

Heb. 9. 13, 14.

3. The

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Heb. 9. 12.

Heb. 6. 27.

3. The Success that immediately followed the Offering of the Sacrifice, shews the Perfection of it, and is a Demonstration that it was accepted, and had obtain'd that Redemption it was made for. He "died for our Sins, and rose again for our Justification". Had he offered that which was defective, he had been kept in the Dominion of Death; but he no sooner had made the Sacrifice, and lain the appointed Time in the Grave, but he was raised again by the Glory of the Father, appear'd unto his Disciples, gave them infallible Proofs of his being Alive, ascended into Heaven in their Sight, and from thence sent his Spirit in a miraculous Manner upon his Disciples, displaying in an astonishing Way, his Acceptance with his Father, the Reality of our Forgiveness, and the Assurance of our Happiness and Peace. This alone is Argument sufficient, that the Sacrifice was perfect, the Oblation entire, such as was demanded, and such as was accepted in our Behalf, and that there was and could be no Need of any other Oblation, to perfect that which he had begun, or to compleat and crown what he had offered; and therefore he hath made a full sufficient Oblation and Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World; for the first Sin which tainted the Race of Men, and is called Original Sin; and for all actual Sins of Men. *By his own Blood he enter'd once into the holy Place, having obtain'd Eternal Redemption for us.* An Eternal Redemption is of an Eternal Force, and must remain to all Eternity in full Estimation, in the Behalf of those for whom it is offered. *Who needeth not daily, as those High-Priests, to offer up Sacrifice, first for himself, and then for the People; for this he did once, when he offered up himself.*

II. The Insufficiency of the Sacrifices of Masses is known by the Perfection of the Sacrifice of Christ. For as that was compleat and entire, the Sacrifices of the Mass may be spared as unnecessary. But to give you the full Sense of the Article, I will shew what the Sacrifices of the Mass are; and shall prove that they are Fables, blasphemous in themselves, and dangerous Deceits.

I. The Sacrifices of the Mass are the Offering of Christ at the Sacrament to the Father, for the Benefit of the Quick and Dead. For the Roman Catholicks believe, that their Bread upon Consecration is turned into the Real Body and Blood of Christ; and when it is so chang'd, they present and offer it to Almighty God, for the Sins of the Living and the Dead, that they may be pardoned and saved by it: So that if we may believe them, they sacrifice our Saviour afresh, every Time they consecrate and offer him to God; and for that Reason call it the Sacrifice of the Mass, and Propitiatory Sacrifices, which as they pretend, purge and purify the Consciences of the Living, and satisfy for the Dead, and ease their Pains in Purgatory. But all this takes it for granted, that the Sacrifice upon the Cross was not sufficient; for allowing that to be compleat, there can be no manner of need of Mass Sacrifice; and therefore as often as they Sacrifice at the Mass, they in Effect declare, that our Lord hath not by

by one Offering perfected them that are sanctified; for they offer him again and again; nay, Ten Thousand Times Ten Thousand, to obtain Remission of Sins; which is directly contrary to Scripture. *Christ being raised from the Dead, dieth no more, y Death hath no more Dominion over him; For in that he died, he died unto Sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.*

2. These Masses are but Fables, not worthy of any Credit amongst Christians. For is it not a Fable to pretend it necessary to offer Christ often to his Father, when he was but once offered to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself, and is by the Appointment of the Father to be offered no more? Besides, is it not fabulous for a Priest, a Minister of the Gospel, to pretend that he can sacrifice his Saviour, and offer him up as a Sacrifice to the Father? He is allowed indeed to pray to the Father in his Name, to plead for himself and others through his Merits, to commemorate the Sacrifice at the Lord's Table with Praise and Thanksgiving, and to beg of God, that the Sacrifice upon the Cross may be saving to his and others Souls. But to pretend to sacrifice him, and to offer him up to the Father, is fabulous to purpose, and deserves to be exploded: For who can be sufficient to offer the Son to the Father, but himself? But this is not all; for the Fable appears to be the more vain, when they pretend by such a Sacrifice to obtain Forgiveness of Sin, to abate the Torments of Purgatory, and to help the Living and the Dead. For this is Fable upon Fable, and is not worthy of a sober Thought, were it not so seriously taught, and wonderfully trusted in. But what Forgiveness can be had without shedding of Blood? And whereas by their confession there is no shedding of Blood at this Sacrifice, how can Forgiveness be purchased by it? But thus it will be, when Men leave the Scripture, and pursue Notions and Fables of their own setting up. *By his own Blood he enter'd in once into the Holy Place, having obtain'd Eternal Redemption for us: — So Christ was once offered to bear the Sins of many.*

Heb. 9. 12,
latter Part, &
28.

3. These Masses are blasphemous Fables, and reflect upon God, as if what he accepted as sufficient, was not esteem'd sufficient by him; they blaspheme our Lord, as if he fail'd in his Undertaking, and was not a compleat Redeemer of the World; they abate of the Sacrifice he made, as if that was deficient, and stood in need of other Sacrifices, to recommend and make it effectual; they misrepresent his Resurrection, as if it was allow'd him before he had fully satisfy'd his Father, or wrought out our Salvation; nay, they blaspheme his Ascension, as if he ascended too soon, before he had finished his Work upon Earth; his Intercession, as if it was made effectual by the Application of new Sacrifices; they bring a bad Report upon his Government of his Church, as if he was not able to provide for it, but by Repetition of Sacrifices: But to compleat the Blasphemy, it is supposed, that all that he did, and suffered before, is to no Purpose without these Masses. But I would by all Means know, whether these Mass-Sacrifices procure pardon of Sins, by their own Worth and Merit, or not?

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If

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Heb. 9. 22.

If by Virtue of any particular Worth of their own, then it is manifest, that the one Sacrifice made upon the Cross, by their own confession, was defective. And is not this blasphemous to the Purpose? For then it will follow, that Pardon of Sin may be obtain'd without that Blood that was shed upon the Cross. But if these Mass-Sacrifices obtain Forgiveness by Virtue of the first Sacrifice upon the Cross, then it will follow, that they are no Sacrifices, or at least not meritorious. And is it not blasphemous to the first Sacrifice, to give the Name of Sacrifices, and of Propitiatory Sacrifices, and such as profit the Quick and the Dead, to those, which in Reality, are no Sacrifices, and merit nothing at the Hands of God? And thus consider them any Way, they are blasphemous Fables, and may not be regarded, as we love our Souls: *For without shedding of Blood there is no Remission or Pardon of Sins.*

4. These Mass-Sacrifices are dangerous Deceits, not fit to be propos'd as worthy of Belief, or to be relied upon by any that value their Souls. Whatever is not according to Scripture, must be in this Case deceitful: Now the Scripture sets forth Christ, as dying but once; but by these Sacrifices he is represented, as dying daily, or as being sacrificed daily, which is the same Thing. The Scripture says, that "he hath appear'd once in the End of the World, to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself": And these represent him as appearing every Day, for the self same Purpose in divers Places and Manners, to put away Sin from the Quick and the Dead. Is it not therefore a dangerous Deceit, to persuade People to expect him in the Bread, to worship him there, to look for Forgiveness and Favour from him? Whereas he but once died, was but once sacrificed, and the Offering he made was so effectual, that there could be no need to repeat it: And whereas Sin was put away by that one Oblation, is it not a dangerous Deceit to invite People to attend to the Mass-Sacrifices, and to neglect the other; or to divert Men from looking unto Jesus, who sits at the Right Hand of God, in great Majesty and Glory, and from imploring his gracious Intercession and Assistance in their Behalf, and to call them to a Wafer, as if he was present there, and offered by a poor Sinner to the Father in their Behalf, and to direct them to expect their Pardon from That? This is all Deceit; for it is plain that he is not there, as he is represented; and as plain, that he is no Sacrifice there offered, that there is no Blood then shed, and no Remission then obtain'd, but by that Meritorious Blood that was shed upon the Cross. *Ye were not redeemed with corruptible Things, as Silver and Gold (and Wafer); but with the precious Blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without Blemish, and without Spot.*

1 Pet. 1. 18,
19.

Having thus explain'd the Article, I think it proper to tell you, That we ought to thank God, that we are freed from such blasphemous Fables and dangerous Deceits; That we should trust wholly to the Sacrifice once made upon the Cross; And should call upon our Saviour, as he is in Heaven, and live up to his Commands; For we can expect no Relief, when we are in the Grave.

1. Let

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1. Let us praise God, that we are freed from these dangerous Fables and Deceits. We are not taught that Christ is with Body and Blood in the Sacrament corporeally, nor are we directed to worship a Piece of Bread, or to believe that the offering up of it to God, will expiate for our Sins, or help the deceased; nor may we put off our Repentance, in Expectation that a Mass will relieve us in the Grave; or revel in our Vices, in Hopes that if we should go to Purgatory, some surviving Friend or other will procure some Masses in our Behalf. Far be it from our Church to entertain you with such blasphemous Fables, or to exhort you to trust to such dangerous Deceits: She declares her Mind freely against them, and directs you to look upon them as they are; to call them by their proper Names, and to give no Head to them. For what Man, that is in his right Mind, would trust to a Piece of Bread, as a Sacrifice, and call it his Christ, or would depend upon the Oblation that is so made for Forgiveness and Salvation? As we are better taught, let us prize the Truth we enjoy, and take heed, that as our Church does not deceive us, we do not deceive our selves: For though we have and profess the Truth, if we do not live up to it, we deceive our selves to the Purpose, and shall find it so in the End. For, *Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a Man soweth, that shall he also reap.*

Gal. 6. 7.

2. Let us trust wholly to the Sacrifice that was made upon the Cross, and to the Meritorious Blood of our Saviour for Mercy and Peace. In this we cannot be mistaken or be deceived; for it is manifest, that he died for Sinners, and called Sinners to Repentance; and if we believe in him, and rely upon his Merits and Mediation, as he hath directed, we cannot miscarry. His Sacrifice was the same which the Father required, the same which was appointed to be the Price of our Redemption, the same which was a sufficient Compensation to the Divine Justice, for all the Transgressions we are guilty of; and we may trust to the Merits of it, we may plead it in our Prayers, we may call boldly upon the Father in his Name, and may in our greatest Streights make him our Refuge and Confidence. But for other Sacrifices, let us not regard them; the Sacrifices of the Mass, let us not put any Stress upon them: Were they but meer Commemorations of the first Sacrifice, we might then hearken to them; did they but represent in a Sacramental Manner, the Body and Blood of Christ dying for us, we might admit them: For so we remember our Lord as he hath commanded; and so it is our Duty to keep in Mind the Sacrifice of the Cross. But to call them real Sacrifices, to count them Propitiatory, to depend upon them as beneficial to the Living and the Dead, is to turn them into Blasphemy, Fable, and Deceit, and we may not admit them; rather let us look to the Cross, trust to that Sacrifice once made there, and build all our Hopes and Expectations, not upon Bread, but upon the Lord that hath redeemed us. *Who for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the Shame, and is set down at the Right Hand of the Throne of God.*

Heb. 12. 2.

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XXXI.Heb. 12. 28,
29.

3. Let us apply our selves to him, as he is in Heaven, sitting at the Right Hand of God in great Majesty and Glory; there we may be sure our Prayers will find him: There he reigns, and must reign, till he hath put all his Enemies under his Feet; and from thence we may expect and look for Relief: 'Tis thither our Church directs you; there we beseech you to be earnest in your Prayers, and fixed in your Persuasion; and not to depend upon fabulous Pretences, and consecrated Wafers. We know no Use of them but what is Sacramental; and 'tis dangerous to build any Faith upon them: And since the Passage is free and open to the Throne of Grace, be sure to go directly thither, and by Prayer and Supplication make your Requests known unto God in the Name of Jesus, and call upon him too as your Redeemer and Saviour; and beg that as he died for Sinners, he would allow you to enjoy the Benefit of his Death, and grant to you Pardon and Peace. And as ye pray, see that ye live, that ye may walk as the Redeemed of the Lord, as those that are ransomed by the Blood of Jesus: And as ye hope to be saved by his Sacrifice, let the Powers of it free you from Sin, and lead you to Righteousness, that ye may find it an effectual Sacrifice in your Salvation. *Let us have Grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with Reverence and godly Fear; for our God (though he is willing to pardon) is a consuming Fire.*

ARTI-

ARTICLE XXXII.

I TIM. III. 2. The first Part.

A Bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one Wife.

EVERY one is to consider what State of Life he is fit for, whether Celibacy or Marriage; that no Man may undertake Continency, but upon good Grounds, and with some Assurance, that he may keep his Virginity. Those of the Clergy should especially weigh their own Inclinations, that they may not vow rashly, and under the Pretence of serving God better than other Men, offend him the more. Our Religion leaves every one to his own Liberty, and to avoid Fornication, allows every Man his own Wife; Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, as well as other Men. **A Bishop then must be blameless, the Husband of one Wife.**

Which gives us the Reason of the Thirty Second Article of our Church, which expressly says; "Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, are not commanded by God's Law, neither to vow the State of single Life, or to abstain from Marriage. Therefore it is lawful also for them, as for all other Christian Men, to marry at their own Discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve better to Godliness". From whence we may consider,

I. No Celibacy or single Life is enjoyn'd under the Gospel; for Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, are not commanded by God's Law, neither to vow the State of single Life, or to abstain from Marriage.

II. They, as well as other Men, are permitted to marry, according to their Discretion: Therefore it is lawful also for them, as for all other Christian Men, to marry at their own Discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve better to Godliness.

I. No Celibacy or single Life is enjoyn'd under the Gospel to Bishops, Priests, or Deacons; they are at Liberty as other Men, to dispose of themselves to a single Life, if they so think fit; but there is no Necessity laid upon them to do it. I shall consider, that Celibacy or single Life is left to every Man's Choice, who finds himself fit for it; that it is unreasonable to force any to lead such a Life: If any that are single, may upon that Account be more useful in the Church, they may not be constrain'd to remain single: But Celibacy

Article bacy is not necessary for the Ministry ; however, if some chuse that
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Matt. 19. 12,
 latter Part.

1. Celibacy, or a single Life is left to every Man's Choice, whether Bishop or Lay-man, according as he finds himself disposed and resolved in the Service of God : Those that can understand the Permission of our Lord, and behave themselves in all Purity and Chastity in Obedience to it, may " make themselves Eunuchs for the Kingdom " of Heaven's Sake", and may devote themselves to a single Life : And if Bishops, Priests, and Deacons find themselves so inclin'd, and can abstain from Marriage, without offending God in some other Way, they are at Liberty to comply with that Permission, (as some will have it), and may consecrate themselves to a single Life, if they think fit ; if they have the Gift of Continency, they are obliged to keep it, and to adorn it with a Chaste Conversation. And this any other Men, that find themselves equally qualified to devote themselves to a single Life, may do as well as they. For our Lord does not direct his Words to the Ministry alone in this Case, but to Men of any Station or Condition of Life ; he that can obey him, is at Liberty to comply. *And there be Eunuchs, which have made themselves Eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake ; he that is able to receive it, let him receive it, whether Bishop or Layman, whosoever it is, that finds himself able to follow this, let him do it.*

1 Cor. 7. 36.

2. It is unreasonable to force any Men or Women, Friars or Nuns to lead a single Life. For our Lord hath left all at Liberty to consider their own Inclinations, and to advise with their own Tempers ; and they that find, they may with Safety do it, may bind themselves to it. But those that are otherwise disposed, are at Liberty to marry, and they may not be forced to abstain. For what Man hath Authority to drive Men to that by Compulsion, which our Lord hath left to Choice ? For he only says " He that is able to receive it, let him receive it", he does not command them to be forc'd and constrain'd, to be threaten'd and disinherited, if they do not, but leaves it to their Choice, if they have the Power. But others say, The Priests must not be married ; Friars and Nuns must be single all their Days upon Earth ; and that which our Saviour permits to be consider'd, is made a Command for all, and turn'd into a necessary Obligation ; but without Reason ; for if any find they can remain single, without any Danger, they may be as devout and chaste, as they please ; but they may not be constrain'd, for Force is not consistent with Choice, or Necessity with a Free-Will Offering. *But if any Man think he behaveth himself uncomely towards his Virgin, if she pass the Flower of her Age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not, let them marry.*

3. If it be granted that single Persons, in some Respects, might be more useful to the Church, they may not be obliged for that Reason to remain single, or forced to do that for a Temporal Advantage,

which may endanger their Eternal Welfare. It is not for Men to prescribe in this Case, what is fittest to be done; for God is best able to judge who are fittest to attend in his Sanctuary, and who not: And since he hath nowhere forbidden married Men from drawing near to his Altar, but hath rather chosen and appointed some of them to be his High-Priests, to enter into the Holy of Holies, and to attend immediately upon him, they are not to be excluded from his Service, upon the Account of any secular Benefit; nay, since under the Gospel, some married Men were chosen to be Apostles, the Witnesses of Jesus, and to publish the glad Tidings of Salvation, it is in vain to separate married Men from the Ministry; for doubtless they may, with as much Safety, be Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, as they were Apostles and Evangelists. The Church in this Case is not to consider so much her own Advantage, as the Will of God, and should not consult so much how to be rich and great, as how to be pure and good. For it is a scurvy Reflection that may be cast upon her, when she any where forbids Marriage. For, *In the latter Times, some shall depart from the Faith, giving heed to seducing Spirits, and Doctrines of Devils, forbidding to marry.* But, 1 Tim. 4. 1, 3.

4. As much as it is pretended, that Celibacy is for the Advantage of the Church, it is not necessary for the Ministry, and may not be impos'd upon them. Married Men may be as able Ministers of Christ as single Persons, may serve God as acceptably, convert Mankind, and build up Men in their most holy Faith, with as much Success. Peter, a married Man, was the first that spake to the People, after he had received the Gift of Tongues, and was as successful in his Ministry as any. And ever since, God hath made no Difference betwixt the Ministry of the married and unmarried, but hath blessed their Endeavours with an equal Favour: Nay, in this present Age, he rather blesses the Ministry of the married. For whereas those in another Church are forced to lead a single Life, and are constrain'd to keep up Superstition and Idolatry, and are neither left to read the Scriptures freely, nor to speak their Mind freely to the People: The married Ministry retain the Scriptures, instruct the People with the Word of God, warn them against Idolatry, and have experienced God's particular Protection and Blessing. The Church therefore hath no Authority to exclude those from the Ministry, which God makes use of for the good of Souls; and they may not be called unnecessary, which divide the Word of Truth aright. And notwithstanding the great Praise that is given to Virginity, *Paphnutius* in the Council of Nice convinc'd his Hearers, that Marriage of Priests was Chastity in the Sight of God. *Nevertheless he that standeth stedfast in his Heart, having no Necessity, but hath Power over his own Will, and hath so decreed in his Heart, that he will keep his Virgin, doth well.* We condemn them not, if they live chaste as they ought to live. 1 Cor. 7. 37.

5. If some prefer and chuse that Life, they ought to be well advis'd before they vow it, and tye up themselves so strictly, that they can-

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cannot without Sin revoke what they have done. There is no Doubt to be made, but those who have the Gift of Continency, may devote themselves to God, and do well in it ; but they ought to know themselves well, to try their own Tempers carefully, and to take a steady View of that which may follow, before they engage themselves too far, and know not how to retreat. Our Church discovers in this Case the primitive Temper, condemns none for leading single Lives, provided they keep themselves undefiled Members of Christ's Body. But if Men have not that Gift, they may not lay a Snare for their own Consciences, and resolve to vow that, which they foresee they shall break some other Way. The Sum is this, Our Lord hath left us at Liberty to live in Celibacy, or not ; he leaves it to every ones Choice to determine, and to do, what he judges best. If Bishops, or others, continue single, and live in Chastity, they are to be commended for it : If they marry, they do not offend ; married or unmarried, we should all take Care to live in all Purity and Modesty, and to shew forth in chaste Conversation our Christian Works with Wisdom. *For ye are bought with a Price, therefore glorify God in your Body, and in your Spirits, which are God's.*

1 Cor. 6. 20.

II. Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, as well as other Men, are permitted to marry, according to their Discretion, as they shall think may conduce to their Welfare and Peace, and contribute to the Repose and Quiet of their Lives. The Word of God gives them this Liberty, and they had better take it, than offend him by the sad Effects of a forced Celibacy.

I. Our Church hath declared this with great Advisedness, considering what God hath published in their Behalf. For his Word hath asserted the Lawfulness of their Marriage, not only in general Terms, which concern other Men as well as themselves, but in express Words, as plain and clear as can be desired in such a Case. For the Spirit of God foreseeing, that in the last Days some would take the Confidence to forbid to marry, hath taken particular Care to obviate the Error, and to prevent such dangerous Mistakes, by making Provision in allowing Bishops, Priests, and Deacons to marry, in directing them in their Choice and Government of their Families. " They must chuse Wives that are grave, sober, faithful in all Things ; and they must govern their Families well, rule their own Houses with Understanding, having their Children in Subjection, with all Gravity ". And therefore they are allow'd to dispose of themselves, as may best answer these Purposes. That Bishops may marry, the Text says, **He must be the Husband of one Wife** : That Priests or Elders may ; *Ordain Elders in every City, if any be blameless, the Husband of one Wife.* That Deacons have the same Liberty ; *Let the Deacons be the Husbands of one Wife.*

Tit. 1. 5, 6.

1 Tim. 3. 12.

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2. They had better marry, than be concerned with the bad Effects of a forced single Life, which are too many, notwithstanding the Vows of Chastity, where Priests, Friars, and Nuns are constrain'd to be single. It is a current Maxim among them, That Fornication is far more tolerable than Marriage. And it is for this Reason reputed no great Crime to be unclean one with another; and where there is that impure Liberty taken, we may be sure the Effects cannot be commendable. How many Infants Skulls and Bones have been taken out of the Walls and Vaults of Nunneries? No less than Six Thousand found in a Moat, in Pope Gregory's Time, (as is reported) cast in there to hide and conceal the Incontinencies of Priests. And so it will be, when Men and Women privately indulge their Lusts, and brutish Inclinations under the demure Covert of a single Life, and would appear to be more Pious and Chaste, than their Bodies will allow them to be. Much better had they done, if they had married, in the Fear of God, own'd their Children to the World, and provided for them. For such Effects of a forced Celibacy, are so scandalous in themselves, and destructive to Mankind, that if nothing else could be laid to the Charge of it, those that profess it, must needs know that "Marriage would have been more honourable, and the Bed undefiled; and that such Whoremongers God will judge". *Flee Fornication. Every Sin that a Man doth, is without the Body; but he that committeth Fornication, sinneth against his own Body.* 1 Cor. 6. 18.

This being the Sense of the Article, I shall justify the Determination of our Church in this Case; leave every one to advise with their own Tempers and Inclinations; and in whatsoever State they are, I shall advise them to take Care that they lead Holy Lives; that nothing of Impurity or Uncleanness may be laid to their Charge.

1. I must justify the Determination of our Church in this Case, which lays no Restraint upon Ministers or People, where Christ hath left them at Liberty. For as she hath no Power to make that necessary, which Christ hath left to every Man's Determination, she hath done well in declining the Use of any such Power, and cannot but be commended by those that can judge with Indifference: For if any Church challenges an Authority to bind the Consciences of Men and Women to do that which they cannot perform, and which God never commanded, it exceeds its Commission, and must be acknowledged as erring from the Faith; Forbidding to marry, when God created Male and Female on purpose, that under his Blessing they should increase and multiply. We must give our Church her true Commendation, in leaving her Ministry and others at Liberty, to advise with themselves about their own Disposal, and to marry, or not, as they shall think fit and expedient. Herein she does what God hath directed, treads in the Apostles Steps, and conforms to the Practice of the best Times: And is so far from being justly obnoxious to the Censures and Accusations of her Enemies, that she places a true Value upon the Word of Christ, and is to be esteemed for her Care and Faithfulness. For why should Man bar the

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1 Cor. 7. 2.

the Use of Marriage to any Order, when God hath left it to every Man's Choice and Determination; and when meer Reason will prefer to do so, rather than do worse? *To avoid Fornication, let every Man have his own Wife, and every Woman her own Husband*", and not vow against it.

2. Every one is left to advise with their own State and Inclinations, to consider what is properest for that State of Life they are in, and to determine for the best; that if they find Marriage necessary, they may dispose of themselves as Christians, chuse meet and proper Companions, and do that once with so much Prudence, that they may never repent of what is done, and never desire to chuse again. Or if a single Life agrees best with their present State, if they find it freest from Trouble and Care, more proper for Piety and Contemplation, more at Leisure for Devotion and Acts of Charity, they may carefully devote themselves to it, and adorn it with all Modesty and Purity, all Exemplariness and Sobriety, and may not in the least make it a Cloak for Uncleaness, or a Pretence for private Licentiousness and Sensuality. Every one should thus deliberate and ponder with himself, before he chuses and prefers one State before another; and when Persons have determined either for Matrimony, or a single Life, they should take as much Care to behave themselves with all Purity and Continency; that in whatsoever State they are, they may live as the Servants of Jesus, as subject to his Holy Laws, and accountable to him for a married or single Life. Married or unmarried, all are his Servants, and are obliged to do their utmost in living up to his Laws; they must ponder and consider what State of Life may be to them most serviceable to Godliness, most edifying according to their Tempers, in Righteousness, and most preparatory to future Glory: And what they chuse, they ought to adorn with all Goodness and Purity. *And this I speak for your own Profit, not that I may cast a Snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that you may attend upon the Lord without Distraction.*

1 Cor. 7. 35.

3. In whatsoever State ye are, see that ye lead Holy Lives, that nothing of Impurity or Uncleaness be laid to your Charge. If any of you prefer, for the present, a single Life, whether in Celibacy, or Widowhood, see that ye acquit your selves as the Servants of Christ; that ye may be modest in Behaviour, chaste in your Words, and pure in your Actions; that your Resolutions may be strong, your Inclinations restrain'd, and that ye may be without Rebuke in the midst of an evil World. In order to be thus fixed in Goodness, it will be necessary for you to guard your Thoughts, to restrain your Fancies, to covenant with your Eyes, to avoid vain Company, to fast and pray, and to use all other proper Helps, to maintain your Integrity before God. But if ye are in a married State, ye must take heed that ye live within the lawful Bounds of it; that ye observe your Marriage Vows with all Faithfulness, and keep wholly to your Companion, as long as ye both shall live: Ye must often consider the Laws that Christ hath laid upon the married, that

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that ye may please him in that State, and turn the married Life into an entire Submission to him. He thus speaks to Husbands by his Apostle ; " So ought Men to love their Wives as their own Bodies ; " he that loveth his Wife , loveth himself. Husbands love your Wives, and be not bitter against them : Dwell with your Wives according to Knowledge ; giving Honour unto the Wife, as the weaker Vessel ; as being Heirs together of the Grace of Life, that your Prayers be not hinder'd ". As he speaks, see that ye obey. Likewise he thus commands the Wives, " Submit your selves unto your own Husbands as unto the Lord. Let the Wives be subject in every Thing : Let the Wife see that she reverence her Husband ; be subject to your own Husbands ; and let your Adorning be the Ornament of a quiet and meek Spirit ". As he thus commands you, see that ye practise. And let all, Husbands and Wives, single Persons, and in Widowhood, prepare for that happy Place, where ye shall be like to Angels, and live for ever in Peace and Glory. *They neither marry, nor are given in Marriage, neither can they die any more ; for they are equal unto the Angels, and are the Children of God, being the Children of the Resurrection.*

Luk. 20. 35,
36.

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I COR. V. 5.

To deliver such an one unto Satan, for the Destruction of the Flesh, that the Spirit may be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus.

EVERY Society challenges a Right to expel their own Members, when Necessity so requires ; that the rest may be secured in their Duty, and freed from the Contagion of bad Examples. And the Church of Christ hath that inherent Power, to admonish, censure, and expel any Christian that behaves himself contumaciously, contrary to the Laws of Christ. This Power is settled by our Lord upon the Governors of it, and is to be used for Edification and Peace. St. Paul, who as an Apostle, was invested with it, understanding, that one amongst the *Corinthians* had committed Incest, in having his Father's Wife, looked upon the Crime to be so scandalous and dangerous, that he judged it necessary, in the Name of God, of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in his Spirit and Power, **To deliver such an one unto Satan for the Destruction of the Flesh, that the Spirit may be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus.**

Which shews the Foundation that the Thirty Third Article is grounded upon, which says, "The Person, which by open Denunciation of the Church, is rightly cut off from the Unity of the Church, and excommunicated, ought to be taken of the whole Multitude of the Faithful, as an Heathen and Publican ; until he be openly reconciled by Penance, and received into the Church by a Judge, that hath Authority thereunto".

- I. There is a cutting off from the Unity of the Church by Excommunication.
- II. When this is pronounced, or the Person is so cut off from the Church, he ought to be look'd upon by the whole Multitude of Christians, as an Heathen and Publican.
- III. Though he is so cut off, there is some Hope left ; for upon his Repentance, he may be restor'd and receiv'd into the Church, and his Spirit may be saved in the Day of the Lord.

I. There is a cutting off from the Unity of the Church, by Excommunication ; which that it may be rightly done, we must consider the Persons that are liable to be so severely punished, the Method

thod of Proceeding in it, whilst there is Hope left of Recovery ; and when Obstinacy does make such Severity necessary.

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I. The Persons, that are liable to be so severely punished, are such as are guilty of great Crimes, and either err from the Faith, or allow of scandalous Practices.

First, Such as err from the Faith, and depart from that Form of sound Words, once delivered to the Saints, and not contented with the plain Truths of Christianity, presume to maintain such Doctrines as are contrary to the Gospel : Such are liable to be censur'd ; and if they continue obstinate, to be cut off from the Society of Christians by Excommunication. For they publish Opinions that are not consistent with Salvation, and maintain Principles that are damnable ; and for this Reason it is better to expel them from the Church, that they may learn not to blaspheme, than to permit them to spread their Contagion amongst the Faithful, and to endanger others. The Apostles thought it necessary in their Time to censure those " that denied the Father ; that said the Resurrection was already past ; that brought in damnable Heresies, denying the Lord that bought them". And in Imitation of them, the Church, when she sees Cause, may exercise the same Power, in censuring and excommunicating those, whose Principles are not sound and agreeable to the Truth as it is in Jesus. For we are as much obliged to keep steddily " to the Faith once delivered unto the Saints, as to lead Holy and Exemplary Lives". *Holding Faith, and a good Conscience, which some having put away, concerning Faith have made Shipwreck ; of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander, whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.*

1 Tim. i. 19; 20.

Secondly, Such as allow of scandalous Practices, and are guilty of heinous Sins, are obnoxious to be thus severely handled. For the Church must not only guard the Faith, but the Conversations of Christians : And if any in her Communion live in open Violation of the Laws of Christ, and hate to be reform'd, they lie open to be cut off from Christ, and the may proceed to Excommunication : For Christians are bound to live as God commands, and may as well be punished for the Transgression of the Laws of Christ, as for a Departure from the Faith ; there being as much Danger in a vicious Conversation, as in corrupt Principles, and as much Hurt in scandalous Vice, as in Heretical Opinions ; for Christians may be damned for being wicked and sensual, unclean and impious ; as much as for being Lovers of vain Opinions, and Admirers of false Doctrine. The Reputation of Christianity is thereby obscured, the Flock expos'd to Hazards, and the Name of Christ blasphemed : And therefore when St. Paul heard of the bold and intolerable Behaviour of the incestuous Corinthian, he made no Scruple to deliver him to Satan ; as knowing that a wicked Life was equally dangerous, as a corrupt Faith : And he was very much concern'd, that the Congregation was no more affected with the Sense of that abominable Sin, and took no Care to hum-

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1 Cor. 5. 2.

humble themselves for it, in order to prevent the Mischief it would otherwise bring after it. *And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this Deed might be taken away from among you.* The Persons then that may be rightly excommunicated, are such as corrupt the Faith and Morals of Christians.

2. When the Persons that deserve this Severity, are found out, we are directed by our Lord to proceed with great Wariness, Consideration, and Charity; that the Person may not be surpriz'd with the Censures of the Church, or precipitated or hastened into Ruin by unadvised Proceedings. Such therefore are to be admonished privately with a great deal of Love, to be rebuked with all Gentleness and Goodness, that if Kindness can work upon them, they may be reclaimed without Excommunication.

First, When any fall into scandalous Errors or Crimes, the Governors of the Church, or private Persons, are to admonish them privately of their Error or Sin, and to direct them better. And this is to be done twice or oftner, at several Times, that the offending Party may have Opportunity to recollect himself, to consider how true the Accusation is, and how reasonable the Admonition and Advice. And if he out-faces this private and friendly Reproof, we may take Two or Three with us the next Time, and admonish him before Witnesses, that he may have nothing to say in his own Defence, but may be self-condemned, when such plain Things in the Presence of his Brethren are laid to his Charge, and prov'd upon him. Our Lord enjoins us to use this private and free Admonition, that if there be any Modesty and Shame left in the Offender, he may come to himself, before any farther Steps are taken. *If thy Brother shall trespass against thee, go, and tell him his Fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy Brother: But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the Mouth of two or three Witnesses, every Word may be established.*

Matt. 18. 15,
16.

Secondly, All this is to be transacted with a great deal of Gentleness and Goodness, that the Offender may not be enraged by Reflections and Provocations; but may see that ye aim at his Safety and Welfare, and say no more than what is true, with brotherly Love and Affection. This recommends an Admonition to his calmer Thoughts, applies a Reproof with Kindness, and launches the Tumour with the sincerest Goodness: And if the Heart is not hardened, and the Man is not too far gone in his Error or Sin, may soonest work upon him, shew him his Mistake, and bring him to a sound Mind. For Love softens all those Expressions, which otherwise might inflame; and Meekness and Gentleness wins upon the Man: So that he knows not how to take that unkindly, which comes with so much Temper and Affection. We may be the sooner induc'd to be thus careful and good natured in our Admonitions, if we consider, that the Offender is a Brother, one for whom Christ died,

died, who is appointed to be an Heir of Salvation, and who by such good, courteous, and affectionate Usage, may be brought back to his Duty, to his Lord's Favour, and to the Hope of Glory. *If any Man obey not our Word by this Epistle, note that Man, and have no Company with him, that he may be ashamed; yet count him not as an Enemy, but admonish him as a Brother.*

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2 Thes. 3.
14, 15.

Thirdly, If this kind Application makes no Impression, then we may make it Publick, acquaint the whole Congregation with it, tell it to the Church, and leave it to the Governors thereof, to admonish, censure, or punish, as they shall judge best, as the Case may require, and our Allegations prove necessary. Our Lord expressly says, "If he neglect to hear (before Witnesses), then tell it unto the Church". The Case then lies fairly before the proper Judges, who are the Governors; who thereupon, after a full and impartial Hearing of the Evidence, have Authority to rebuke him before all, and to proceed, if he continue obstinate, to Excommunication. Thus St. Paul directs Timothy to deal with notorious Sinners; and as Timothy was a Bishop and Governor of the Church, other Bishops are obliged to imitate him. "Them that sin, rebuke before all, that others also may fear". And if this makes no Impression, and does not succeed, the Offender is to be excommunicated. First, he is to be barred from the Communion of the Church; and if still he continues refractory, he is next to be delivered unto Satan, and to be cut off from the Unity of the Church, from Christ the Head, and is to be consign'd over to the Power of Satan, as if he was no longer under the Protection of Jesus. This was the Practice of the Primitive Church, when God was pleas'd, in a miraculous Manner, to concur with the just Censures of it: For he withdrew his Protection from those that were Excommunicated, and the Devil took visible Possession of them, and tormented their Bodies with noisome Diseases, to the Destruction of the Flesh, "that the Spirit might be saved in the Day of the Lord". But since it hath pleas'd him to withdraw his miraculous Concurrence with the Censures of the Church, the Secular Powers have been made use of in punishing those that are under Excommunication; for still the Obligation is upon us. *Put away from your selves that wicked Person.*

1 Tim. 5. 20.

1 Cor. 5. 13.

II. When any Person is so cut off, he ought to be look'd upon as an Heathen or Publican, as cast out from the Society of Christians, and fallen back into his State of Nature, and having at present no more Right to, or Interest in the Mercies of the Gospel, than an Heathen or Publican. If indeed he is not rightly cut off, and an unjust Sentence is pronounc'd upon him, he loses not the Favour of God in Christ, but only the Communion with Christian Society, which expelled him; and he must in Meekness and Patience refer the Cognizance of his Case to the Great Day, when the just Judge will rectify all the Mistakes of fallible Men. But if there is no Mistake in the Censure, and the Keys were duly employ'd in shutting him out,

Article
XXXIII.Matt. 18. 17,
18.

out, he is without all doubt to be accounted as an Heathen or Publican. But because we know not the Hearts of Men, and cannot be so well assured, that there was no Error in the Excommunication, we must acquiesce in the Judgment of the Church, as we are private Men, and count him as a Heathen or a Publican, till he hath made his Peace by an unfeigned Repentance and Reformation, and given good Proof of his Sincerity therein. *If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen Man, and a Publican. Verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven.*

III. Though he be thus cut off, there is some Hope left for him; upon his Repentance he may be restored and received into the Church, by a Judge that hath Authority thereunto.

I. He may be reconciled by Penance, or by true Repentance, which the Penance he is to perform, is to testify and manifest to the Church. Not that any Penance can satisfy God for Sin committed, or merit Forgiveness, or a Pardon: For the whole Life spent in Sorrow and Lamentation, is too little, and insufficient to purchase such an Advantage; but Penance is enjoined for the Punishment and Correction of the Sinner, that he may smart for what he hath done, and be more careful for the future; for the Terror of others, who look on, that they may shun such heinous Sins, and keep themselves upright before God; and for the Satisfaction of the Church, that good Proof may be given to her, of Humiliation and Amendment. And it was for this Reason that the Primitive Church enjoined Fasting and Prayer, and would not allow the Excommunicate to approach their Holy Service, till they had gone through the Task, which was set them for their Trial. And however of late, whether by ill Management, or ill Principle, Excommunication is despised, and those that are cut off by it, cast Contempt upon it; it was usual in those Days for them to wait at the Church Doors, with dejected Looks, and sorrowful Hearts, with Sighs and Tears, with Prayers and Entreaties, that they might be admitted to the Peace of the Church, and enjoy the Blessings of its Communion: And we can expect no general Reformation, till Men are sensible of God's Wrath for Sin, and the Advantage of mutual Prayers, to procure the Pardon of it; till they dread the Censures of the Church, and esteem their Reconciliation with it, the properest Step that can be taken, to be reconciled unto God; till they obey them that are set over them in the Lord, as those that watch for their Souls, and must give an Account. Were this Christian Temper revived, Excommunication managed with Care, and the Censures of the Church revered, we might see Religion prosper, and Heresy and Sin retreat with Confusion and Shame. *Let the Elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double Honour, especially they who labour in the Word and Doctrine.*

1 Tim. 5. 17.

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2. He may be restored and received into the Church, by a Judge that hath Authority thereunto, who is to absolve him, and admit him to Communion with it. This Judge, according to Primitive Christianity, is the Bishop of every Diocese, or his Official in Holy Orders authoriz'd and intrusted by him to do it. As the People have no Power to excommunicate, they can have no Power to absolve: The Authority to bind and loose, to cast out of the Church, and to receive into it, was not given unto them, nor exercised by them. It was to the Apostles that our Lord said, "Whosoever Sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whosoever Sins ye retain, they are retained": And no other than their Successors, the Bishops and Presbyters of the Church, can succeed them in that Power, or exercise it aright. Our Church therefore proceeds upon the best and safest Grounds in this great and weighty Concern, and hath the Concurrence of Scripture and Antiquity to warrant that Excommunication she rightly pronounces, or that Absolution which she gives. And if Excommunication was as solemnly managed, with as much Caution and Care, as we have Truth to maintain the Reality of it; if when Necessity requires, that tremendous Sentence was pronounc'd by proper Persons, upon scandalous and notorious Offenders; if it never was employ'd to gratify Revenge, to humour passionate Resentments, or to give Uneasiness to the truly Pious upon slight and trivial Occasions; if the worst of Principles were always censured by it, and the worst of Vices condemned, it might rise in its Reputation once more, recover its Terrors, and we our selves should not lie so much expos'd to the Obloquy and Reproach of our Enemies: And as it was so solemn at first, that nothing but a frivolous Use of it could bring it into Contempt; it is in it self so solemn still in the Opinion of the Learned and truly Christian, that nothing but the solemn Application of it, can rescue it from Slight, retrieve its Honour, and restore it once more to be the Terrible Denunciation of Wrath and Judgment. The Grant is very great, which our Lord after his Resurrection, confirms to the Apostles; *Whosoever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever Sins ye retain, they are retained.* Joh. 20. 23.

From this Discourse I must tell you, That the Dissenters subscribe this Article. That if their Abuse of the Power does not scandalize them, why should the same, if abused, (as is pretended) scandalize us? That it is pity the notorious Sinners, when excommunicated, were not look'd upon as Publicans and Sinners; and that if we do well, there is no Danger of Excommunication, or of the Loss of the Favour of God.

1. The Dissenters subscribe this Article, and acknowledge the Truth of it. So that it is not the Power they deny, but the Church, and the Persons that use it. For all of them in their Places own Excommunication, as consistent with the Laws of the Gospel, and proper for the Preservation of the Church, and use it in their several Fraternities, as they see Occasion. So that by their Confession, we are no Criminals in owning of the Power, but in challenging it. But

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Rom. 13. 3.

if they have it inherent in them, it is without doubt inherent in us; and if they judge their own Communion not the worse for the Scandals of their Excommunications, how can ours be contemptible upon that Account? They are bound doubtless to make Allowances for Failings amongst us, as they do amongst themselves. But if after all, it is found that our Church is the most primitive, the Power devolves solely upon us; they usurp in challenging it, and do worse in using it, and the Power they own by Subscription, will arise against them. *Wilt thou then not be afraid of the Power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have Praise of the same.*

Rom. 13. 4.

2. It is pity that when notorious Sinners are Excommunicated by us, they are not looked upon (as our Saviour commands) as Heathens and Publicans. For if they were shunn'd by all, they might the sooner be reclaimed: But we shew no Dislike to them, but rather encourage them to despise the Excommunication; for we live amongst those that are as obnoxious, upon the Account of corrupt Principles, to be excommunicated, as others for a wicked Life: And some are content, that the Censure may be vilified, that they may slight it when under it. There seems to be an Agreement in Sentiments and Opinions, in running down the Danger of an Excommunication, and exposing of those that use it; that all Sorts may get beyond the Dread of it, laugh at it in their Turns, and tread the Power of the Church under Foot. But though this may be done with Consent, to lessen the Power of the Keys, 'tis pity that scandalous Principles and Practices under that Judgment, were not abhor'd, and their Persons shunn'd, that Virtue and Truth may be kept up in Reputation, and Vice punished. For in the End the sad Effects of Indemnity will be felt, when it will be perhaps beyond our Power to prevent them. For the Magistrate *"is the Minister of God, a Revenger to execute Wrath upon him that doth evil."*

1 Pet. 2. 15.

3. If we profess the Truth and do good, we need not fear any Excommunication. For it reaches not any that are in their Duty, and can in Reason affect none that hold the Faith and lead Holy Lives. If we therefore take heed to our Hearts and Lives, the Power of the Church will rather encourage than injure us, rather strengthen and support us, than frighten us. We need not then be concerned at Excommunications, but take Care we never deserve them. *For so is the Will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the Ignorance of foolish Men: as free; and not using your Liberty for a Cloak of Maliciousness, but as the Servants of God.*

ARTICLE

ARTICLE XXXIV.

I COR. XIV. 26. The latter Part.

Let all Things be done to edifying.

NO Assembly can be managed without Order, or governed without some Ceremonials, or Rules of Behaviour; and all Christian Assemblies must be under the Direction of some general Rules, by which they may be conven'd or dissolv'd, directed and influenced for the greater Decency and Improvement. This the Dissenters will acknowledge, and practice in their several Meetings, tho' they refuse to subscribe to the Article concerning the Traditions of the Church. For all must acknowledge, that it is proper for the Governors of a Church to provide for the Gravity and Decency of Worship, and not to allow private Persons to interrupt the Auditory in their Devotions with a Psalm of their own, a Doctrine, a Tongue, a Revelation, or Interpretation: But to provide, that all Things be done with Decency for edifying. **Let all Things be done to edifying.** Which justifies the Thirty Fourth Article, which says,

“ It is not necessary that Traditions and Ceremonies be in all Places one, or utterly like: For at all Times they have been divers, and may be changed according to the Diversities of Countries, Times, and Men's Manners; so that nothing be ordained against God's Word. Whosoever through his private Judgment, willingly and purposely, doth openly break the Traditions and Ceremonies of the Church, which be not repugnant to the Word of God, and be ordain'd and appointed by common Authority, ought to be rebuked openly (that others may fear to do the like), as he that offendeth the common Order of the Church, and hurteth the Authority of the Magistrate, and woundeth the Consciences of weak Brethren. Every Particular or National Church hath Authority to ordain, change, or abolish Ceremonies or Rites, ordain'd only by Man's Authority; so that all Things be done to edifying”. Let us consider,

I. That Traditions and Ceremonies may differ in the Church of God; it is not necessary, that Traditions and Ceremonies be in all Places one, or utterly like: For at all Times they have been divers, and may be changed, according to the Diversities of Countries, Times, and Men's Manners; so that nothing be ordained against God's Word.

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II. There is Offence given by those that break the Customs of the Church, which are not repugnant to the Word of God: Whosoever through his private Judgment, willingly and purposely, doth openly break the Traditions and Ceremonies of the Church, which be not repugnant to the Word, and be ordained and appointed by common Authority, ought to be rebuk'd openly, (that others may fear to do the like) as he that offendeth the common Order of the Church, and hurteth the Authority of the Magistrate, and woundeth the Consciences of weak Brethren.

III. It is in the Power of any Particular or National Church, to establish or vary the Ceremonies of it. Every Particular or National Church, hath Authority to ordain, change, or abolish Ceremonies or Rites ordain'd only by Man's Authority; so that all Things be done to edifying.

I. Traditions and Ceremonies may differ in the Church of God, and there is or can be no Necessity, that they should be always one and the same, or exactly alike in all Places, and at all Times, thro' the whole World. For as the Genius and Temper of Men differ, they have their Liberty to ordain, change, or alter the Circumstances of their Worship, as they shall find most edifying.

1. At all Times they have been divers, and not alike, according to the different Humours of Nations: From the first Publication of the Gospel, there hath been a Difference, and there will be a Variation as long as the World lasts. In *St. Augustin's* Time, the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church at *Milan*, were not the same that were ordained and observed at *Rome*. And formerly we have had our Methods *secundum Usum Sarum*, and *secundum Usum Bangor*; every Diocese took the Liberty of varying in their Cathedrals in some minute Circumstances; and some Churches had their peculiar Customs: In *Thessaly* they baptiz'd all at *Easter*; at the Church of *Antioch* in *Syria*, they plac'd their Altar at the West End of the Church, when most others plac'd it in the East; in *Cyprus* and *Capadocia* they began to interpret the Scripture every Lord's Day at Evening: And amongst all Forms of Religion (saith *Socrates*) you shall no where find Two that pray alike. At this very Day, there are not the same Ceremonies allow'd in the *Grecian* Churches, which are current amongst our selves; they have their particular Methods, as we have ours, according as their Governors in the Lord ordained, with whose Judgment the Primitive Christians comply'd with all Readiness, and gave them no Disturbance upon the Account of Ceremonies: They were sensible of the Obligation, *Obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit your selves.*

Heb. 13. 17,
the first Part.

2. They may be changed, according to the Diversities of Countries, Times, and Men's Manners. For the Excellency and Advantage of Religion does not lie or consist in Ceremonies, nor can it prove ineffectual, because variously set off, and dress'd up in different

tent Places ; it is one and the same under different Forms, Traditions, and Customs, and proves as saving in one Place, as it does in another. As the Countrey is dispos'd, or as Emergency of Affairs may require, Forms may be changed, and Ceremonies altered ; those in use in the Primitive Times, are in many Particulars defaced and worn out ; and those which we allow of at present, may without prejudicing Truth, or endangering Religion, if Necessity so requires, be laid aside, and others established in their Stead. For they are to be considered according to the Influence they may have upon Godliness, when the different Humours and Inclinations of Men are weigh'd with Prudence, and God's Glory is particularly regarded : And those, without Dispute, are best and most to be preferr'd and esteem'd, which are found most serviceable for the Decency of Worship, the raising up true Devotion, and the Encouragement of an Holy Life. And if upon such a View, some in Use at present, should be thought unnecessary, and others should be advanced in their Stead, we ought to submit to such an Alteration. For as our Church acknowledges the Power, we must acknowledge she may use it, when any urgent Necessity requires, and our Governors concur with it, for the Establishment of Peace in our Borders, and of Decency and Order in our Assemblies. But as clamorous as some have been for an Alteration, they have not as yet thought fit to make any ; being sensible that whilst they condescend to please their Enemies, they offend and disoblige their Friends ; and by contriving to comprehend a few disaffected Tempers, may provoke too many to forsake our Communion. For the Decency of our Worship is approv'd of by many more, than an Alteration can gratify. *Let all Things be done decently and in order.* Article XXXIV. I Cor. 14. 40.

3. No Tradition, Rite, or Ceremony may be ordained or followed against God's Word, or any express Command in it ; for we may not comply with the use of any Ceremony, which leads us into Disobedience to the Word of God : For the Word is, and will be binding upon the Conscience of every Christian, though all the Authority of the World were employed against it ; and we must chuse rather to obey the plain Commands of God, than to conform to the Inventions of Men. All Ceremonies therefore, which may be set up or pulled down, must relate to that, which the Word of God hath left indifferent to be done, or not done, as may be found most profitable to Godliness ; and to be observed, or not observed, without offending God, or breaking any Commandment, which he hath given us. Upon this Consideration we assert, that the Ceremonies of our Church may be lawfully used, because in no Respect repugnant to the Word of God ; nay, we have defended the Use of them, as consistent with our other Duties, as that which does not clash or interfere with any one Christian Law, or hinder us in our Christian Warfare, and can challenge our greatest Enemies to mention one Law of God, or so much as one Word that our Ceremonies make void and ineffectual. *So is the Will of God, that with well-doing ye put to silence the Ignorance of foolish Men.* I Pet. 2. 15.

II. There

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II. There is Offence given by those that break the Customs of the Church, which are not repugnant to the Word of God, and are ordained by common Authority: It is against the common Order of the Church, hurteth the Authority of the Magistrate, and woundeth the Conscience of weak Brethren, making them timorous and feaful, where there is no Cause; and therefore such are to be rebuked openly, that others may fear.

1. He offendeth against the common Order of the Church, who presumes to break the establish'd Customs, and disturbs the Peace of it. For if a Church's Rules for common Order are observed, there will be the same Uniformity all the Land over, the same Worship in all Assemblies; the same Devotions and Charity amongst Christians every where, and the Piety of the Land upon the Lord's Day appears to be as exact and agreeable, as of one large Family. The Offence which breaks this Order, must be very great; it occasions Divisions in Worship, Misunderstandings in Brethren, and sets those at Variance and Difference, who are commanded to live in Unity and Love; and who are invited to go to the House of God together, and to pray for and to set forward one another's Happiness and Peace. And whatever some may think of this, it is in it self a great Fault, opens the Mouths of the Prophane, and leaves too many, in some Places the greatest Part, to their Liberty, to absent themselves from all Religious Assemblies, and to spend the Lord's-Day as they list.

Rom. 14. 12. *So then every one of us shall give an Account of himself to God.*

2. This Offence which breaks the publick Order of the Divine Worship, hurteth the Authority of the Magistrate; as if he had not Power, with the Advice and Concurrence of the Governors of the Church, to appoint and ordain innocent Ceremonies, for the promoting Decency and Order in the Church: Whereas he hath Authority to provide for the Publick Worship of God, and the Establishment of true Religion. Kings are to be Nursing-Fathers, and Queens Nursing-Mothers unto the Church: And as the Kings amongst the Jews settled the Temple Service, appointed the Courses of the Priests in their Attendance and their daily Service; Christian Princes have the like Authority; and such as refuse to comply with that Order, which they establish, provided it is not contrary to the Word of God, hurt this Authority of the Magistrate, diminish from the Efficacy of it, and deny them the Use of that Power, which every one challenges in his own Family and Assembly. For they that break the Order of the Church, will not allow that the Order of their own Families should be broken; and whilst they speak against our Ceremonies, they will have their own Congregations be punctual in the Observation of what they establish; which must be reputed a great Mistake; for certainly the Magistrate may as well govern them, as they govern their Families and Congregations: For "he is the Minister of God to (every one) for good", and may oblige Christians "to serve God acceptably with Reverence and Godly Fear".

"Fear". He cannot indeed alter the Essentials of Religion, for they are the same whether Men believe or not; but he may provide for the Practice of true Religion, may appoint Time and Place for Prayer, and Attendance upon the Word, and may ordain the Order and Method of it; and if any, to humour their own private Judgment, willingly, openly, and purposely contradict, oppose, and break that Order he hath established, they hurt his Authority, expose it to Contempt, and offend therein. *Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience sake.*

Rom. 13: 5.

3. This wounds the Conscience of weak Brethren, who are apt to be too timorous, and to believe those Suggestions of evil-minded Men, who would thus frighten them from their Duty, and draw them from the Communion of the Church. For there are some that are prone to startle at every Thing, which they hear spoken against: And when such are told that Ceremonies are of a dangerous Consequence, they are too soon prevail'd upon to dislike them, and by Degrees prejudiced against those that use them, and then run from the Church, as dangerous to their Souls. The Wounds that have been made upon such weak Brethren, are too visible, in their Doubts and Fears, Scruples and Aversions, that are current amongst us. Some approve of our Prayers, but they do not so well approve of a Surplice: Others value our Sermons, but they esteem not our Forms of Prayer; and too many have left us, and associate by themselves for purer Worship. From whence came all these Wounds upon Conscience, but from the first breaking of the Orders of the Church? One scrupulous Man hath drawn forward another, till we are divided, at variance, unsettled, and that Order of Worship, which should unite our Hearts and Devotions, and which would (if sincerely us'd) heal up our Wounds, is made the Occasion of our Divisions. *But when ye sin so against the Brethren, and wound their weak Conscience, ye sin against Christ.*

1 Cor. 8: 12.

4. Such as thus offend, ought to be rebuked openly, that others may fear to do the like. For no private Man may be allowed to oppose the Establishment of a Church, or to prefer his own Method before the Publick Orders of it. For are not the Governors of the Church as able to consider what is proper for the Divine Worship, and decent for a whole Congregation, as private Zealots? And when they have ordained the same, is not their Authority of Force? Are not their Orders binding upon the Consciences of private Men, who are to submit for the Sake of Peace and Charity? And if any oppose, ought they not to be reprov'd and rebuked, as those that set up their private Judgment against the Sense of a whole Community? But, alas! though they may be rebuked, they will not bear it: though they have been reprov'd before all, they regard it not; nay, they are so far improv'd in their Boldness, that others will not fear, being supported by them, and Rebukes are cast away amongst them, and prove ineffectual. However, whether they will hear or not, the Order of the Church is of that Moment, that we are bound to vindicate

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Rom. 14. 19.

dicat her Ceremonies, and to reprove those that oppose. *Let us therefore follow after the Things which make for Peace, and Things wherewith one may edify another.*

III. It is in the Power of any Particular and National Church, to establish or vary the Ceremonies of it. Every Particular or National Church, hath Authority to ordain, change, or abolish Ceremonies or Rites ordain'd only by Man's Authority; so that all Things be done to edifying.

1 Cor. 8. 13.

1. The Church hath Power to ordain or change Rites, ordained only by Man's Authority. For what was set up by Man, may be taken down by Man. But as for Ceremonies which God hath ordained; such as Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, the Church hath no more Power to ordain others in their Stead, or to change them, than she hath to ordain or alter any Articles of Faith; because she hath no Authority to make void what God hath established, as an Ordinance to be observed for ever. So that all the Power the Church hath to ordain or change, relates only to such Ceremonies as are set up by Man, which may be changed with as much Reason (as Occasion may serve) as they were at first set up. *Wherefore if Meat make my Brother to offend, I will eat no Flesh while the World standeth, lest I make my Brother to offend.*

1 Cor. 14. 12,
the latter Part.

2. Such Ceremonies may be chang'd which Man hath ordained, so that all be done for Edification, that is, for the better, and for Advantage of the Church, for the Improvement of Religion, and to do more Service than those which were current before. Upon such Considerations, what Man hath ordained may be alter'd: But then it is not left to every conceited Zealot to judge of that which is most edifying, or to any humourfome Christian to chuse for himself; for at that Rate, there could be no publick Order or Agreement; for that which suits one Man's Fancy, would displease another: But it is left to the Governors of the Church, to consider with great Caution and Deliberation, what may be proper to ordain, and what may be most proper to lay aside, or change. For they as Governors should be most able to judge of such Matters, and are invested with sufficient Power to act and proceed therein, as they find Cause; and in all such Changes, their Flocks are to submit to their Determinations. *Seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the Church.*

From this consider, That the Dissenters ordain and change their Ceremonies, as they judge proper; That our Church hath more Reason to vindicate her own; That all Order and Ceremonies are design'd for Edification in Peace, Charity, and Holiness.

1. The Dissenters are indeed excused from subscribing this Article, and yet they challenge and use the like Authority, and ordain and change their own Ceremonies, as they judge most proper and convenient. There are scarce Two Congregations amongst them, that have exactly the very same Way and Method of taking in, or expelling Members: Every one is left at Liberty to agree upon their own Cere-

Ceremonial, and they differ not with one another upon that Account. One Sort will have silent Meetings, and none oppose them : Another have their Lectures, and they proceed as they think fit ; a third Sort allow any to speak in their Turns, and they are pleased with their own Modes. Allowing this to be agreeable to Matter of Fact, I must declare, I cannot see why they may not allow our Church to proceed in her own Way, and to ordain Ceremonies that please her : And if they allow of no Members, but what comply with their Modes, we may demand the same Compliance from our own ; And if their Authority is so sacred, that it may not be opposed, ours must be much more sacred ; and it will be a difficult Task to excuse their Separation from us : For I hope we have as much Authority to ordain Ceremonies as they ; and that ours may be as edifying as theirs ; and that we may enjoin those in our Communion to be faithful by Reproofs and Punishments. If our Authority is Christian, let them take heed, lest they break the Church's Peace for nothing. *Follow Peace with all Men, and Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord.* Heb. 12. 14.

2. All Order and Ceremonies are, or should be, for Edification, Peace, and Charity, that the Communion of Christians may be secur'd, their Worship perform'd with all Decency, and their Affections and brotherly Kindness kept up and preserved in their mutual Improvements. It is happy when Christians in a Nation agree together in Principle and Practice; when they have no Jealousies and Suspensions of one another, but meet together in one Place, with Hearts full of Devotion and Affection, and own the same Faith and Communion, join in the same Prayers and Praises, attend to the same Word and Doctrine; and as they come up together to the House of God as Friends, return from thence with contented Spirits, and Christian Charity, and honest Zeal for Practice. This Happiness the publick Order of the Church is design'd to promote, and could we lay aside all Prejudice and Conceit, it would promote it in a great Measure amongst us; for we value not Ceremonies, but as they fence Religion, guard Devotion, encourage Holiness, and prosper Godliness. *For the Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink, but Righteousness and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these Things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of Men.* Rom. 14. 17, 18.

that they may be understood by the People.

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ARTICLE XXXV.

2 TIM. IV. 2. The first Part.

Preach the Word, be instant in Season, out of Season.

AS there are Differences in the Parts and Learning of Ministers; and some not so able and sufficient to compose as others; and as the Necessities of a National Church are many, and upon a Reformation most urgent, especially when the Enemies of it are upon the Watch for Advantage; the Governors ought to be the more discreet in providing for the Safety of the People, and careful to publish such Discourses, as being distinctly read, may preserve them from former Errors, and build them up in their most Holy Faith, that the Ministry may **preach the Word, be instant in Season, (and) out of Season.**

Which may justify the Thirty Fifth Article, which follows next in Course; "The Second Book of Homilies, the several Titles whereof we have joined under this Article, doth contain a Godly and wholsome Doctrine, and necessary for these Times: As doth the former Book of Homilies, which were set forth in the Time of *Edward the Sixth*; and therefore we judge them to be read in Churches by the Ministers, diligently and distinctly, that they may be understood of the People". In which I shall consider,

I. The Worth of the Homilies, or Sermons set out by Authority: They contain good and wholsome Doctrine.

II. Their Seasonableness when at first published: They contain that Doctrine, which is necessary for these Times, or those Times, when the Article was penn'd and publish'd.

III. Their Usefulness for the People: And therefore we judge them to be read by the Ministers, diligently and distinctly; so that they may be understood by the People.

Of these in Order.

I. The Worth of these Homilies or Sermons set out by Authority is considerable, as may be found in their Perusal: For they treat of the chief Heads of Christianity, such as may inform the Understanding, influence the Will, move the Affections, and lead the Man

(a) Hom. 12.

to Heaven. (a) Such as treat of the Nativity of Christ, and discover how the Son of God was born of the Virgin *Mary*, "was made
" under

“ under the Law, to redeem us that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons ” : (b) Of his meritorious Death and Passion, and show how he died for our Sins, and bore our Iniquities ; how the Chastisement of our Peace was upon him, and through his Stripes we are healed : (c) Of his glorious Resurrection ; how the Third Day after he was dead and buried, he rose again, was seen often by many, and known to be the same Jesus that was crucified ; and after he had given good Proof of his being Alive, how he ascended into Heaven, there to interceed in the Presence of God for us. By them we are instructed, (d) how to prepare for the Sacrament of his Body and Blood ; how to be worthy Communicants, and to set forth our Lord's Death, till he come to Judgment : (e) How we ought to repent of our Sins, to amend our Lives, and to bring forth Fruits worthy of Repentance, “ that our Light may shine before Men, that they may see our good Works, and glorify our Father in Heaven ” . (f) How we ought to fast sometimes, and abstain from Food, that we may bring down the Body, and make it subject to the Spirit : (g) That we may be the more Intent upon Prayer, and mind the Things that belong to our Eternal Peace : And because nothing either dishonours or destroys Religion so much as an idle, vain, profane Life, these advise us (h) against Idleness and Sloth, and would have all Men be diligent in their Callings, that they may provide Things honest before all Men ; serve God acceptably, and have wherewith to give unto others. (i) And that Christians may discover Decency in their Garments, and Prudence in their Behaviour, these admonish us to adorn our selves with Modesty, as becometh those that profess Godliness, and warn us against all Excess of Apparel, and Vanity in Garments ; that we may be clothed with Humility, and not look upon Garments more than upon the Soul ; and that we may be sober, and watch unto Prayer : (k) We are by them cautioned against all Gluttony and Drunkenness, that we may not eat to Excess, or drink to Excess, but eat with Moderation to satisfy Hunger, and drink to assuage Thirst, and be so temperate and sober, as to keep the Mind serene, and the Body in good Health and Strength to serve the Lord. Such Sermons as treat of these Subjects, with an unaffected Stile and Christian Simplicity, may well be reputed worthy of your Learning, and valuable for their Godly and Wholsome Doctrine ; especially considering, that *the Time will come, when they will not endure sound Doctrine, but after their own Lusts shall they heape to themselves Teachers, having itching Ears.*

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(b) Hom. 13.

(c) Hom. 14.

(d) Hom. 15.

(e) Hom. 19.

(f) Hom. 4.

(g) Hom. 7, 8.

(h) Hom. 20.

(i) Hom. 6.

(k) Hom. 9.

2 Tim. 4. 3.

II. The Seasonableness of these Homilies appears, in that they were fitted to the Times, when they were first published, and acknowledged to be necessary for them. I shall therefore consider those Times, and what our Times are at present, that ye may see how seasonable they were, when first made, and how fit they are to be continued.

H h 2

1. When

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1. When these Homilies were first penn'd and publish'd, the Nation was just delivered from Popery, and freed from the Tyranny of Rome, and it was judged very necessary, that all People should be instructed out of the Word of God, and understand the Danger of Popery. Whereupon (l) one Homily gives an Account of the reverent Estimation of God's Word, that it might be preferr'd before the Inventions and Superstitions of Men, and received as the only certain Rule of Faith and Manners: And because the Church of Rome pretended to be the only Catholick Church, (m) another Homily tells you, what the Church of Christ is, and the right Use of the Church; that as it is the Pillar and Ground of Truth, it ought to preserve the Truth, and not suppress it in an unknown Tongue: And as it is God's Truth, it ought to be imparted to all Christians; and because that Church sets up Idolatry, and encourages it in the Worshipping of the Host and Images, (n) Another Homily sets forth the Danger and Peril of Idolatry, warns People against worshipping of Images, Saints, or any other; and calls upon them to turn their Adorations to God, and to worship him only, as the only and proper Object of their Adorations. And whereas all the Roman Service was perform'd in an unknown Tongue, (o) another Homily shews in direct Terms, that Common Prayer and Sacraments ought to be administer'd in a known Tongue; in a Language that every one understands, that the whole Congregation may know what is done, and join their Hearts and Affections with their Devotions. And since Rome valued it self so much for Works of Supererogation and Merit, (p) Another Homily sets forth the true Nature of good Works and Fasting. And (q) another the true Intent of Almsholding, that the People may know, that whatsoever they do, or can do, is but their Duty; that when they have brought down their Body by Fasting, and repeated their Prayers with the most fervent Devotion; when they have denied themselves, and abounded in their Duty, they may see they are but unprofitable Servants, can merit nothing, or deserve nothing; for they have but done that which was their Duty to do. So that if ye can look back, and behold the Nation just delivered from Roman Servitude and Bondage, ye must confess these Homilies to be very seasonable, and excellently fitted to the Exigencies of those Times, to secure the People in the Profession of the Truth; and to prevent them from relapsing into the Mire again: All Precaution is proper, when that comes to pass; *they shall turn away their Ears from the Truth, and shall be turned unto Fables.*

2 Tim. 4. 4.

2. Our Times at present indeed are different from those, when these Homilies were penn'd. For we are freed from Popery, and at present in no great Danger. But may the Homilies for that Reason be spared, and laid aside as useless Lumber? Can we spare them in this refined and polite Age, as old-fashioned Discourses, and entertain the Ear with sweeter Cadencies, and better Sense? Or are not these Homilies as necessary for our Times, as for the Times of our Fore-

Fore-Fathers, and as proper, and seasonable as ever? For is not *Rome* as ready to seize upon us as ever, were it in her Power? And is it not fit our Flocks should understand the Idolatry, Superstitions, and Dangers of it? And if Popery did not lie so much in wait for us, have we not many amongst us, that bring in dangerous Errors, who depart from the Faith, and preach up Divisions? And is it not proper to consult the Sentiments of our Fore-Fathers, to advise with their Discourses, that we may know the Danger of Innovation in Religion, and the furious Zeal of Rebellion, and keep steddily to our Duties? And is it not commendable for us, to keep to the Principles of the Reformation, to guide our selves by their Advice, who were martyr'd and burnt for our Religion? If this is proper and becoming us, the Homilies may be excellent Discourses, still of great Use, and necessary for these Times, and for the Times that may succeed ours: For they are standing Discourses to examine the Principles of our Church by, and ought to be preserved as her undoubted Monuments and Sense, to be consulted upon all Emergencies, and produc'd as her undoubted Principle. And as of late we have experienced this Advantage, in producing her Opinion in Cases of Rebellion from thence, who knows but after-Ages may make it as necessary to consult her Sentiments upon other Points, and to alledge her Homilies, as a sufficient Bar against all the Fancies of Enthusiasm and Innovation, and as good Proof of our own Conformity to her genuine Doctrine and Principles? For she would never judge it proper for us to read that Doctrine to the People, which she does not approve of and recommend as her own Sense and Judgment. She is part of *the Church of the Living God, the Pillar and Ground of the Truth.*

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1 Tim. 3. 13; latter Part.

III. The Usefulness of these Homilies is asserted, in that they are judged fit to be read diligently and distinctly to the People, that they may be understood and consider'd by them. And this is to be done to shew the Sense of our Church, to supply the Want of Learning in those, that are not able to compose for themselves.

I. Upon Occasion, these Homilies are to be read in Churches by Ministers, to shew the Sense of the Church, and how uniform and agreeable her Principles are, in all her publick Exercises, in her Articles and Homilies, Prayers and Offices; for they do not contradict one another, or establish contrary Principles; but harmonize or agree as they should. Our Articles are the same in Doctrine with our Catechism; our Homilies with our Articles; and were the Ministry as advised as it should be, there would be no Diversity of Doctrine, or Variation of Principle amongst us; but they might preach the same Truths, which the Church professes, and in her Language set forward the Salvation of Souls. In this Respect it is not below the Fathers of our Church, or the greatest and most learned Doctors in her Communion, to peruse her Principles, to look over her Homilies, and to read them distinctly to the People; that they may keep

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1 Tim. 4. 13.

keep to the same Rule, speak the same Words, and accustom the People to the same necessary and wholesome Truths. They may indeed, as they are able, divide the Word of Truth aright, in their own Periods; but as they are Members of the Established Church, and have subscribed to her Principles, and promised solemnly to keep steddily to her Doctrine, they may not expatiate in their own wanton Fancies, varnish over old Errors, and, to establish their own Fame, publish that which the Church never taught, and never authorized them to maintain. And as much as some of them may despise to read distinctly a Homily to the People, they may know that it was not below the Primitive Christians, to read the Apostles Epistles in their Assemblies; nor can it be a Dishonour to any, how big soever, to read an Homily to the People. *Till I come, give Attendance to Reading, to Exhortation, to Doctrine.*

2. These Homilies may supply the Want of Learning in those that are not able to compose for themselves. For thus they may safely publish the Church's Sense to the People, may exhort them to Repentance, and to lead a new Life; may invite them to the Sacrament, and conduct them in the Path to Happiness. And the Governors of our Church think it much better for them, to instruct the People in this Manner, than to leave it to the Choice of the Weak and Unlearned, to entertain the Auditory with the trifling Invention of a silly Imagination. Our Words ought to be well weigh'd, which we presume to speak in the Presence of God, and ought to be very exact and agreeable to his Holy Word, which we deliver in his Name, and repeat to carry on his Work. And therefore they that are not able to compose with Gravity and Steddingness, according to Scripture, had much better read an Homily, and speak the undoubted Sense of the Church, than trouble their Hearers with their own Weakness. Some think that this was the true Reason, why the Homilies were at first published. For just after the Reformation, there were but few Ministers, and in many Places they were glad if they could but enjoy a Minister, that could but read well, and distinctly tell them the Word of God. They were then more forward to inform the Mind, than to please the Ear; and more willing to know what was to be done to enter into Eternal Life, than how to gratify the Fancy, with the Sweetness of Sounds: And therefore they were more willing to hear a Homily than return to Popery. This was looked upon as the prime and chief Reason, why our Homilies are to be read, when able and fit Ministers are not present to preach the Word of God, and to serve the present Necessity, till fit and proper Pastors are provided. For in the Beginning of Queen Elizabeth's Reign, Sermons were not so frequent as they are now; and an Homily was counted a comfortable Refreshment to those, whose thirsty Souls panted after the Word of God, the Waters of Life. Since that Time we have had a Learned Ministry, the Homilies have been disused, and remain amongst us, as the true Sense of our Reformed Church. Our Ministry hath practised St. Paul's Advice to Timothy.

Medi-

*Meditate upon these Things, give thy self wholly to them, that thy
profiting may appear to all.*

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1 Tim. 4. 15.

From hence I must request you not to despise Homilies; To consider
how cautious our Church hath been, and careful to save Souls; And
how happy we might be, would we keep steddily to her Principles,
and live up to them.

1. When we hear our Homilies, let us not despise them, or
count them unfit for our curious Ears; for they contain sound and
wholsome Doctrine, agreeable to the Principles of our Reformation,
and worthy of your serious Consideration. And however of late
they have been slighted, as contemptible, and the Dissenters refuse
to subscribe them, as below their Attainments: Yet as they con-
tain the Doctrine of Christianity, and are the true Remains of our
Church; as they were never yet accus'd as counterfeit, or disprov'd
as erroneous, we ought to pay them that Deference, which is due
to such reverend Monuments, and receive them as the early
First Fruits of our Reformers. Setting aside the Language, that
in those Times was proper and intelligible, plain and fit for a com-
mon Auditory, they contain those necessary Christian Truths, which
may build us up in our most Holy Faith, and put us upon that Ho-
ly Life, which, through the Merits of Christ, may timely prepare
us for Heaven. Our Church hath consider'd the Capacities of all,
and endeavours to suit her Sense to all, that they may be saved. *Even
as I please all Men in all Things, not seeking mine own Profit, but
the Profit of many, that they may be saved.*

1 Cor. 10. 13.

2. Our Church hath been very Cautious in her Reformation, and
prudent in providing for the Instruction and Edification of her Peo-
ple; her Wariness hath been so great, that she hath not only kept to
the Word of God, and the Explication of it, which the Primitive
Times afford; but hath caused her Articles and Homilies, her Ca-
techism and Offices, to agree with great Exactness, to contain the
same Doctrine, and explain the same Faith. So that all speak the
same Sense, and appear to be one and the same Truth. And as her
Wariness hath been thus commendable, she hath provided that every
Person may be duly inform'd what to believe, and instructed and ex-
horted what to practise, that the Salvation of all may be set forward
and secur'd. And it were to be wished that all her Sons, and some
of them of the largest Size, would imitate her Care and Prudence,
and not vary from what she hath established; that we may profess
the same Faith, act from the same Principle, and as we go up to the
House of God as Friends, may agree in Principle and Practice. *Ne-
vertbeless whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same
Rule, let us mind the same Thing.*

Phil. 3. 16.

3. How happy might we be, would we keep steddily to our Church's
Principles, and live up to them! For our Faith would then be secure,
our Lives holy, our Prayers acceptable, and our Ends happy: We
should

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Phil. 3. 1, the latter Part.

should then hate all Innovations in Doctrine or Discipline, shun all erroneous Pretenders to, and Guides in Religion, and keep steadily to the Principles and Interest of the Reformation; all designing Men amongst us would be oppos'd, all novel Doctrines rejected, and the good old Way to Heaven would be trodden in, and recommended. Our Church hath done what lies in her, to entitle us to this Happiness, and nothing but our own hearty Concurrence is necessary to establish it amongst us. Would we but live as we profess, we might be the Care of Heaven, and a Praise upon the Earth. *To write the same Things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.*

Rule, let us mind the same Thing.
 verely, wherever we have already attained, let us walk by the same
 House of God as Friends, may agree in Principle and Practice. We
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 ple; her Wavels hath been so great, that the hath not only kept to
 prudent in providing for the Instruction and Edification of her Peo-
 a. Our Church hath been very cautious in her Reformation, and

3. How happy might we be, would we keep fidelity to our Church's Principles, and live up to them! For our Faith would then be secure, our lives holy, our Prayers acceptable, and our End happy: We should

ARTICLE XXXVI.

TIT. I. 5.

For this Cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in Order the Things that are wanting, and ordain Elders in every City, as I had appointed thee.

IF we look backwards, and trace the Government of the Church down to the Apostles, we shall find from Century to Century, that all along Bishops have been chief and eminent in it; and that immediately after the Apostles decease, they succeeded them in their Care and Ministry. St. Paul left *Timothy* at *Ephesus*, and *Titus* in *Crete* for this very Purpose; and the rest of the Apostles ordained others to supply their Stead in other Places, and to govern the Church in their Absence, and after their Death. St. Paul is very expresse in his Directions to *Titus*. **For this Cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in Order the Things that are wanting, and ordain Elders in every City, as I had appointed thee.**

Which may lead us to the Thirty Sixth Article, which says,
“ The Book of Consecration of Archbishops and Bishops, and Ordering of Priests and Deacons, lately set forth in the Time of *Edward* the Sixth, and confirm'd at the same Time by Authority in Parliament, doth contain all Things necessary to such Consecration and Ordering; neither hath it any Thing, that of it self is superstitious or ungodly. And therefore whosoever are consecrated or ordered, according to the Rites of that Book, since the Second Year of the afore-named King *Edward* unto this Time, or hereafter shall be consecrated or order'd according to the same Rites, we decree all such to be rightly, orderly, soberly, and lawfully consecrated and ordered”. Here we learn,

I. That the Ordination and Government of the Church by Archbishops, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, hath nothing in it that is superstitious and ungodly. The Book of Consecration of Archbishops and Bishops, and ordering of Priests and Deacons, lately set forth in the Time of *Edward* the Sixth, and confirm'd at the same Time by Authority in Parliament, doth contain all Things necessary to such Consecration and Ordering; neither hath it any Thing, that of it self is superstitious or ungodly.

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II. That

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II. That all that are consecrated Bishops, and ordained Elders, Priests, and Deacons, are rightly, orderly, and lawfully consecrated and ordained: And therefore whosoever are consecrated or ordered according to the Rites of that Book, since the Second Year of the aforementioned King *Edward* unto this Time, or hereafter shall be consecrated or ordered according to the same Rites, we decree all such to be rightly, orderly, and lawfully consecrated and ordered.

I. The Consecration, Ordination, and Government of the Church by Archbishops, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, hath nothing in it that is superstitious and ungodly: For Bishops are consecrated that they may perform the Duties of Bishops; and as Priests and Deacons are ordained to officiate in their Places, the same Power that consecrates and ordains them, gives them Authority to perform those Duties, and to officiate in that manner: And as we declare there is nothing superstitious or ungodly in their Consecration and Ordination, there can be nothing superstitious or ungodly in the Execution of their Office, whilst they keep steddily to the solemn Promises they then made according to that Book or Form of Consecration and Ordination. I shall therefore show that the Government of the Church by Archbishops, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, hath nothing in it self Superstitious or Ungodly; That they are to be consecrated and ordained, or to be set apart for their great Employment; And that the Form of Consecration and Ordination prescrib'd in our Church, contains all Things necessary for that Purpose.

I. This Article presupposes, That the Government of the Church by Archbishops, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, hath nothing in it self Superstitious or Ungodly. For it is evident, that Bishops succeeded the Apostles in that eminent Care and Conduct of the Church; that they had many Priests, or Elders, and Deacons, under their Direction and Disposall; and that as in every City there was a Bishop, so all the Priests and Deacons that officiated in that City, or the Suburbs and Jurisdiction of it, were under that Bishop, and obliged to be governed or directed by him. Therefore *Ignatius* charges the Church at *Smyrna* in these Words, *Πάτερ, &c.* "All of you follow (or obey) the Bishop, as Jesus Christ his Father; and the Presbytery (or Priests) as the Apostles; and Reverence the Deacons, as the Command and Ordinance of God". And again to the *Magnesians*; *Ὁμοίως ἔν, &c.* "As our Lord did nothing without his Father, being one with him, neither by himself, nor by his Apostles: So neither do you any Thing without your Bishops and Priests; neither do ye try to do any Thing apart, or upon your own Heads; but for this very Thing, let there be one Prayer, one Intercession, one Understanding, one Hope in Charity, and Joy undefiled, or unblameable". And thus to the *Philadelphians*, *Τίναρ ἐν ποσὶς, &c.* "Ye therefore that are the Children of the Light and Truth, fly (or shun) Divisio and evil Doctrines, and where the Pastor is, there do ye fol-

“ follow as Sheep : For many Wolves, who seem to be worthy of
 “ Belief, lead captive those that were hastening (or running) to
 “ God, by an Evil Pleasure (or charming Discourse.) As many as
 “ are belonging to God, and Christ Jesus, they are with the Bi-
 “ shop; as many as are penitent, keep to the Unity of the Church,
 “ and become the Inheritance of God”. And that ye may know,
 that what *Ignatius* says, was exactly agreeable to the Will of the
 Lord Jesus, and his Apostles, he tells the *Smyrneans*, “ That he
 “ saw our Lord himself, after his Resurrection, in the Flesh, and
 “ believed him to be true”. I might mention *St. Cyprian* next,
 who declares, “ That Bishops are the Apostles Successors, that they
 “ are invested with a Divine Power, and that Heresies and Schisms
 “ arise, when they are slighted and despised”: But these Testimo-
 nies are enough for my Purpose, to show that Bishops had the Go-
 vernment of the Church from the Beginning; and this was so
 manifest, that Hereticks aped the Church in this Point, and were
 solicitous to have Bishops of their own.

Archbishops, indeed, were not so soon known by that Name;
 but their Eminency seems to be admitted soon after the Apostles
 Days; for when a Bishop was so successful in his own, and his
 Presbyters Ministry, as to convert at too great a Distance a numerous
 People, he divided his Charge into more Hands, and Consecrated
 other Bishops, to take a more immediate Care of the Flock; retain-
 ing to himself, and his Successors, the Cognizance of Causes of Ap-
 peal; and by reason of his Eminency over those that were delegated
 from him, he was called Archbishop, or chief Bishop, under whose
 Inspection, the other Bishops ruled the Flock: When Emperors be-
 came Christian, they changed the Bounds of Archbishops and Bi-
 shops Dioceses, as stood most with the Conveniences of the Empire,
 the Bishops enjoying the same Power they deriv'd from Christ, with-
 out Molestation.

2. Bishops, Priests and Deacons, are to be consecrated and or-
 dain'd, or set apart for their great Employments by the laying on of
 Hands, and calling upon the Spirit of God for his Assistance, ac-
 cording to the Custom of the Church; Archbishops and Bishops
 are to be consecrated by two or more Bishops, the Priests and Dea-
 cons are to be ordained by a Bishop, and two or more Presbyters:
 No Man may take this Office upon himself, unless he is called; and
 those the Church looks upon as called, who, for good and weighty
 Reasons, are offered to be consecrated or ordain'd in this primitive
 Manner. In the first Times, which succeeded the Apostles, no
 Society, or Congregation of Lay-men, though never so much di-
 stinguish'd from others by Parts, Attainments, or pretended Purity,
 might take upon them to lay Hands upon, pray over, and send
 others to the Work of the Ministry; and no Elders or Priests, with-
 out the Concurrence of a Bishop, may ordain others to succeed them
 in the Ministry: *St. Paul* ordain'd and consecrated *Timothy*; *Tim-
 othy*, as Bishop, was to ordain others, and is charg'd to be cautious

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1 Tim. 5. 22.

how he did it, that he might not lay on his Hands suddenly, or without Consideration, and repent after he had done it: In Imitation of him and the Apostles, and by that Right convey'd to them by the Apostles, the Bishops of the Christian Church, have consecrated Bishops, ordained Priests and Deacons, and the Ministry is continued to this Day amongst us. And would Men hearken to Reason, attend to the Apostolical Examples, and yield without Prejudice to Truth; this Primitive Order might be preserv'd, and secur'd against all the wild Inventions of mistaken Zeal, and the conceited and proud Usurpation of discontented Presbyters; and in the room of so many Intruders into the Church, we should have none but truly Primitive and Christian Pastors. *Lay Hands suddenly on no Man, neither be Partaker of other Mens Sins; keep thy self pure.*

3. The Form of Consecration and Ordination, contains all Things necessary for that Purpose, and there is nothing Superstitious or Ungodly in it; the Bishops are solemnly commended to the Grace of God by Prayer; are then strictly and particularly examin'd, concerning their Intentions in taking upon them that great Work, and their real Design in executing their Charge, and are as much bound by solemn Promise, in the Presence of God to be faithful, as the Will of Man can conceive or direct; and then the Archbishop, and Bishops, lay their Hands upon his Head, and the Archbishop says to every one, "Receive the Holy Ghost for the Office and Work of a Bishop in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the Imposition of our Hands, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen". And giving him the Bible, adds, "Give heed unto Reading, Exhortation and Doctrine," &c. The Priests also are carefully examin'd, as to their Abilities, and obliged to bring sufficient Testimonials of their good and pious Behaviour; and upon their Ordination, are strictly and very solemnly question'd in all necessary Points; and being tied up by the strictest Vows, to instruct the People out of the Scriptures, to oppose Errors, to be instant in Prayer, to live piously and peaceably, and to obey their ordinary, are devoutly commended by Prayers to the Grace of God; the Bishop, with the Priests present, laying their Hands upon their Heads, the Bishop says to every one, "Receive the Holy Ghost for the Office, and Work of a Priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the Imposition of our Hands; whose Sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven, and whose Sins thou dost retain, they are retained; and be thou a faithful Dispenser of the Word of God, and of his Holy Sacraments, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen". And then the Bishop delivers the Bible to every one of them, saying, "Take thou Authority to preach the Word of God,". The like is done to Deacons, so far as their Office requires. As this is our Form, there is nothing Superstitious or Ungodly in it; and our Adversaries cannot but own, that since the miraculous Gifts are ceased, it's as safe and Christian a Method

thod of conserving the Ministry, as human Prudence can appoint: I am sure it is far beyond the Impulse of a private Call, or the Upstart Lay-Imposition of Hands; and as agreeable to the Apostolical Pattern, as the distance of Time will allow. *Neglect not the Gift that is in thee, which was given thee by Prophecy, with the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery.* Article XXXVI. *1 Tim. 4. 14.*

II. All such as are consecrated Bishops, and ordain'd Elders and Deacons in this Manner, are rightly, orderly and lawfully consecrated and ordain'd; they have all that is necessary to be apply'd to them, in order to set them apart for the Work of the Ministry, and are to be reputed, as they are in Reality, Christian Bishops, Christian Priests and Deacons; and it is no less than a Violation of Order, a Contradiction to the Primitive Establishment, and a slight put upon God's Ambassadors and Messengers, when any of their Flocks throw off that Subjection that was due unto them, disown their Authority over them, withdraw from their Communion, and set up and unite to others in their Stead, to the great Grief of the truly Pious, and Disturbance of the Church of Christ. Would we attend to Scripture, consider who succeeded the Apostles, what a Multitude of Bishops were Martyr'd and Slain, and how some of our own, who had a Hand in composing our Form of Consecration and Ordination, were burnt for Religion; we need not wander or seek for better Ministers, or a better Church, or safer Communion, than what at present we do enjoy; for our Bishops, Priests and Deacons, are according to the Primitive Way; our Church also has the same Apostolical Doctrine and Government, and our Communion is with the Father, and the Son, by his Holy Spirit; we are as well provided for, as any Church upon Earth, enjoy as much saving Truth, as the Christians under the Apostles, as proper and Christian Guides, as *Timothy* and *Titus* sent; and would we hold fast our Principles, and walk according as we are taught, would we live in Union and Peace, love as Christians, bear with one another as Brethren, and all endeavour from the Heart, to serve the Lord Christ, we might be as happy and safe as any Church in the World. *That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have Fellowship with us; and truly our Fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ; and these Things write we unto you, that your Joy may be full.* From this Account of the Article, *1 John 1. 3, 4.*

I shall give you the Opinion of a foreign Presbyterian concerning the Government of the Church; though those at Home will not subscribe to this Article: Show how that the Prejudices against us, upon the Point of Episcopacy, are unreasonable; Direct you to be obedient to those that are over you in the Lord; and intreat you to take care, that ye live as ye are directed by them.

1. I think it proper to give the Opinion of a Foreign Presbyterian, concerning the Government of our Church, that ye may see how

Article. how the Force of Truth will prevail, where neither secular Interest, nor Prejudice are concern'd; It is the Judgment of M. *Le Clerc* now living, who saith, "I have always profess'd to believe, that Episcopacy is of Apostolical Institution, and consequently very Good, and very Lawful; that Men had no manner of Right to change it in any Place, unless it was impossible otherwise to reform the Abuses that crept into Christianity; that it was justly preserved in *England*, where the Reformation was practical, without altering it: That therefore the Protestants in *England*, and other Places where there are Bishops, do very ill to separate from that Discipline; that they would still do much worse in attempting to destroy it, in order to set up Presbytery, Fanaticism, and Anarchy. Things ought not to be turn'd into a Chaos, nor People seen every where without a Call, and without Learning, pretending to Inspiration. — Nothing is more proper to prevent them, than the Episcopal Discipline, as by Law established in *England*; especially when those that preside in Church Government, are Persons of Penetration, Sobriety, and Discretion". Thus he commends our Establishment, whilst those amongst us will not so much as subscribe to this Article, which maintains the Validity of our Ordination. And one may wonder how a Man that writes thus openly, can forbear to throw off Presbytery, and to join with Episcopacy. I cannot well reconcile his Practice with his Words, without borrowing a Distinction from his own Sagacity and private Sentiments. He knows what St. Paul says: *We beseech you, Brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you.*

1 Thes. 5. 12.

2. By this ye see, that the Prejudices against us, upon the Account of Episcopacy, are unreasonable. For the Man that stands by, and is able to judge fairly of our Principles, declares for us, and owns Episcopacy to be Apostolical. And would others be as calm and unbiass'd in their Judgments, they must be of the same Mind; for we submit to those which Christ hath appointed, and the Apostles sent. And can it be a Crime to be obedient unto them, or unto those that are sent by them for the Work of the Ministry, and for the Salvation of Souls? Or are we mistaken when we follow those, which, like *Ignatius* and *Polycarp*, receiv'd the Care and Government of the Church from the Apostles, and laid down this Life for the Flock? Or are we to blame if we use the same Prayers, and remain steddy in that Communion, which Bishop *Cranmer*, *Ridley*, *Latimer*, and *Hooper* join'd in, who died at a Stake for the Truth? Can Episcopacy be Antichristian, which had such faithful Servants of Christ engaged in it? Or is the Name of a Bishop intolerable, when such Martyrs, and abundance of Confessors, with a Cloud of Witnesses, supported and maintained it, as truly Venerable and Christian? What though the Bishop of *Rome* hath abus'd his Name and Power; the Name is not the worse, nor is the Power abominable, because so basely prostituted. Prayer hath been

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as much abused before Crosses, Pictures, and Images, shall we not therefore pray to the Living God? The Cross hath been as much abused; it hath been employ'd upon Holy Water; and Bells have been adored and worshipp'd. Shall we not therefore trust in a crucified Saviour, and rely upon his Blood for Forgiveness, that died upon the Cross? Though therefore Episcopacy hath been turn'd into Ecclesiastical Tyranny, it is good in its proper Sphere, and may be exercised amongst us, according to the Primitive Pattern, for Edification and Peace. *This is a true saying, if a Man desireth the Office of a Bishop, he desireth a good Work.* Article XXXVI. 1 Tim. 3: 1

3. I must direct you to be obedient to those that are set over you in the Lord, and to yield to their Christian Advice, as to that which is appointed by your Saviour for your Safety. If they reprove and awaken the Conscience, be not angry, but consider that they are your Friends, and wou'd thus rescue you from the Power of Satan: If they check and rebuke when ye happen to be overtaken with a Fault, be not high-minded and scorn what is said, but fear him that authorizeth them so to speak; if they exhort and encourage you to go forward in Virtue and Piety, be not heedless and slothful, but receive the Words as if they sounded from Heaven, and labour to grow in Grace, that your Reward may be greater at the last Day; and if they comfort the Weak, support the Feeble, raise up them that were fallen, speak a Word in Season to any, be not unmindful of their Office, but yield up your selves to the Grace of God, to be reclaim'd and strengthen'd, to be supported and advised, to be encouraged and set forward by them in Duty, as by the Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the Mysteries of the Gospel: And though whilst we thus speak, we plead for Respect for our selves, which looks oddly in the Sight of the World; yet since the Growth of Religion depends upon it, and our Office is despis'd; since too many foment an Aversion against us in the People, and study to alienate their Affections from us; we are bound to speak for our selves, when thereby we plead the Cause of God, and must demand your Obedience, when his Honour, and his Authority is concern'd therein. *Obeys them that have the Rule over you, and submit your selves; for they watch for your Souls, as they that must give account.*

Heb. 13: 17.
First Part.

4. I must intreat you to take care, that ye live as those that are instructed and directed by them; this will turn to your Benefit, and to their particular Joy. Ye will be built up in your most Holy Faith, improved in Righteousness, and wait for your Lord with Comfort; and they will have the comfortable Pleasure of beholding your Christian Behaviour, and will give up their Account with Joy, and not with Grief. Let it be your Care to improve under their Ministry, to amend when they reprove, to take heed when they rebuke, to remain faithful as they exhort,

Article XXXVI. hort, that your profiting may appear unto all Men, and your inward Peace may be great. But if any obey not our Words, but slight, scandalize, mock, and cast Contempt upon us and our Work, they hasten their own Destruction, and endanger others.

2 Cor. 2. 15, 16. *For we are unto God a sweet Savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish; to the one we are the Savour of Death unto Death, and to the other the Savour of Life unto Life. And who is sufficient for these Things?*



ARTI-

ARTICLE XXXVII.

I. P. E. T. II. 13. The latter Part.

Whether it be to the King, as Supreme.

THERE is no living upon Earth without Government, and no Peace and Pleasure in Conversation without Law. For tho' Man is rational, and knows what is fit to be done, yet his Passions are many, insolent, and rebellious; and if he be not restrained by Terror, and obliged by Power, he soon becomes brutish, savage, and outrageous; not fit for Society, worse than dumb Creatures, and unhospitable, inhuman, cruel: But to keep him in Subjection, and constrain him to be orderly, the Great Governor above hath appointed his Viceregents below, to command him to be tractable, and invested them with Power to make him so; that being gradually accustomed to Obedience, he may become a good Man, a dutiful Subject, and an humble Christian. Submit your selves, **Whether it be to the King, as Supreme.** Which teaches us to obey the Magistrate as Supreme, and Ruler of the People. Which leads to the Thirty Seventh Article of the Church.

"The Queen's Majesty hath the Chief Power in this Realm of England, and other her Dominions, unto whom the Chief Government of all Estates of this Realm, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Civil, in all Causes doth appertain, and is not, nor ought to be subject to any foreign Jurisdiction. Where we attribute to the Queen's Majesty the Chief Government, by which Title we understand the Minds of some slanderous Folke to be offended; we give not our Princes the Ministring either of God's Word, or of Sacraments; to which the Injunctions also, lately set forth by Elizabeth our Queen, do most plainly testify; but that only Prerogative, which we see to have been given always to all godly Princes in Holy Scripture by God himself; that is, that they should rule all Estates and Degrees committed to their Charge by God, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Temporal, and restrain with the Sword the stubborn and evil Doers. The Bishop of Rome hath no Jurisdiction in this Realm of England. The Law of this Realm may punish Christian Men to death, for heinous and grievous Offences. It is lawful for Christian Men, at the Commandment of the Magistrate, to wear Weapons, and serve in the Wars". Here observe,

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l. The

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- I. The Supremacy of the Queen's Majesty. The Queen's Majesty hath the Chief Power in this Realm of *England*, and other her Dominions, unto whom the Chief Government of all Estates, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Civil, in all Causes doth appertain, and is not, nor ought to be, subject to any Foreign Jurisdiction.
- II. This Supremacy doth not reach so far, as to give Princes the Ministering of God's Word or Sacraments. Where we attribute to the Queen's Majesty the Chief Government, (by which Title we understand the Minds of some slanderous Persons to be offended), we give not our Princes the Ministering either of God's Word, or of Sacraments; to which the Injunctions also, lately set forth by *Elizabeth* our Queen, do most plainly testify.
- III. What this Supremacy imports: No other, but that only Prerogative, which we see to have been given always to all Godly Princes in Holy Scripture by God himself; that is, That they should rule all Estates and Degrees committed to their Charge by God, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Temporal; and restrain with the Sword the Stubborn and Evil-Doers.
- IV. This Supremacy is such a peculiar Regale, that the Bishop of *Rome* hath no Share in it. The Bishop of *Rome* hath no Jurisdiction in this Realm of *England*.
- V. It reaches so far, that it may put to Death for heinous Sins. The Law of the Realm may punish Christian Men to Death for heinous and grievous Offences.
- VI. By the Command of the Magistrate Men may be Soldiers, and fight in the Wars. It is lawful for Christian Men, at the Commandment of the Magistrate, to wear Weapons, and serve in the Wars.

I. The Supremacy of the Queen's Majesty. She hath the Chief Power in *England*, and in all her other Dominions, according to the Laws of the Land: She hath the Executive Authority to rule and govern the Nation; to appoint inferior Magistrates in Subordination to the Throne, and to see that Religion be preserved, the Divine Worship paid, and Ecclesiastical Persons acquit themselves according to the Laws of Christ. This Supremacy is that Power which God hath given, and which all the Subjects, as well Ecclesiastical as Civil, are to acknowledge as given by God.

I. This Supremacy, or Height of Power, is that which God hath given to the Queen, over all Degrees of Men in the Land; the next under him, is the highest in the Government, or his Vicegerent and Minister, to bear the Sword, to punish Evil-Doers, to encourage, commend, and reward those that do well: And as she receives her Authority from him to rule in Justice, and to govern in Righteousness, she is accountable to him for the same, and is in a pecu-

peculiar Manner under his Care and Protection. So that as she is Supreme by Divine Charter, all Allegiance and Submission is due to her, according to the Laws she governs by. But if that should be commanded which God forbids, the Rule is plain that is set before us ; we must rather obey God than Man. *Let every Soul be subject unto the higher Powers ; for there is no Power but of God, the Powers that be, are ordained of God ; whosoever therefore resisteth, resisteth the Ordinance of God, and they that resist, shall receive unto themselves Damnation.* Article XXXVII. Rom. 13. 1, 2.

2. All her Subjects, whether Ecclesiastical or Civil, are to acknowledge her Power, as given by God, and her Authority as originally Divine : For “ by him Kings reign, and Princes decree Justice ”. He is the Author of all Government and Order upon Earth ; and in any Nation or Kingdom, whosoever hath the Supreme Power, is invested with that Authority from above, by which the Publick Peace, and Welfare of the Subjects, is secured and maintained, and every Man’s Life and Property protected and preserved. The Queen amongst us hath the very same Superiority and Grandeur ; and as the Laws of the Land declare, she is God’s Vicegerent, she rules in his stead, bears his Sword, governs by his Authority, and is his Minister and Servant to take care of the Kingdom, and to maintain Order and Peace, Humanity and Religion amongst us. This we have Reason to acknowledge with Gratitude and Duty, being protected in our Persons, and encouraged by her in all Virtue and Piety. *For he is the Minister of God to thee for good ; but if thou do that which is evil, be afraid, for he beareth not the Sword in vain ; for he is the Minister of God, a Revenger to execute Wrath upon him that doth evil.* Rom. 13. 4.

II. This Supremacy does not include a Power to administer the Word and Sacraments ; or, when we own the Supremacy, we do not mean that the Power of administering the Word and Sacraments is thereby given : For the King is no Priest, and hath no Authority to preach the Word, or to consecrate and administer the Sacraments in his own Person. The Queen is to rule and govern Priests and People ; and every Soul, whether Bishop, Priest, or Deacon, is subject to her, and obliged to be obedient ; but she hath no Power to take their Office, or to perform their Part in the Ministration : She may and is bound to provide, that there be Learned and Pious Bishops, Priests, and Deacons ; and is to see that Religion be encouraged, the Subjects be instructed, and the Divine Worship performed with all Reverence and Order : And if any Ministers offend, she may rebuke and punish them ; but she may not intermeddle at the Altar, or presume to take their Office upon her ; that is reserved to them, as their peculiar Duty by Divine Commission. The Kings of *Israel* were Supreme in their Dominions, and were bound to settle the Worship at the Temple, but might not officiate in it. They might appoint the Priests and *Levites* their Places,

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2 Chron. 29.
11.

ces, and were to see that they did their Duties, but were not allow'd to take upon themselves the Office of a Priest or *Levite*. No more may Christian Princes usurp the Office of a Bishop, or Priest; they may and ought to inspect them, but may not concern themselves with that which is their peculiar Duty. For as the Priests, under the Dispensation of *Moses's* Law, had some peculiar Duties; the Ministers of the Gospel have their proper Service, which the greatest Princes of the World may not take upon them; to which they are chosen, for which they are set apart from the rest of Men. *Hezekiah* told the Priests and *Levites* in his Time, *My Sons, be not now negligent, for the Lord hath chosen you to stand before him, to serve him, and that you should minister unto him, and burn Incense.*

III. This Supremacy giving Offence to some, when it was given to the Queen, the Article explains what is intended thereby, that Prerogative which hath been always given to Godly Princes in Scripture by God himself, or the Command and Government of all their Subjects, whether Ecclesiastical or Civil, of what Nature or Degrees, Quality or Improvements, Employments or way of Living forever. For as they live in the Queen's Dominions, and are under her Protection, they are under her Laws, and responsible for their Behaviour to her Jurisdiction and Authority: And let their Condition of Life be what it will, they cannot plead any Exemption, or any Privilege of being freed from her Power. I know the *Roman* Catholic Priests will pretend, that they are only subject to the Pope: But in Nations where Kings are Papists, the Priests are Subjects, let their Pretences be what they will, as they oftentimes find to their Cost. And there is as much Reason that they should be subject here, as elsewhere, and more also. If all Sorts of Men were not subject, the Queen would not be Supreme: If Priests were not as responsible to her Justice as Lay-men, she hath not the Command of her Subjects, and tolerates she knows not what. 'Tis therefore absolutely necessary that Ecclesiastical Persons, Bishops, and Priests, should be subject to her as well as Lay-Men: For otherwise it will lie in their Power to disturb the Government, and oppose Authority. This was the Reason that our Fore-Fathers asserted the Supremacy of the Queen, to let her Subjects know, that she was their Governor, had the Command over them, and that none might pretend to be exempted or excus'd from their Obedience. And this is no other Prerogative than what all Princes challenge, and exercise in their Dominions: They are the Heads, the Chief, the Supreme, and all others are subject to them. And so is the Queen amongst us; she hath the Prerogative of being above all in her Dominions, the Chief, and Highest Ruler amongst us: All are subject to her, and obliged to obey her in their Places. *Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience sake.*

Rom. 13. 5.

IV. The Supremacy is such a peculiar Regale, that the Bishop of *Rome* has no Share in it, and has no Jurisdiction in this Realm
of

of England, nor can pretend to any Power over our Queen, or us her Subjects. If he had any Jurisdiction amongst us, he must have it by Divine Grant, or by Prescription, or by Consent; but he has no Title in any of these Respects, and therefore he can have none over us; and our Queen is our Lawful Supreme Governor. He can have no Right to us by Divine Charter; for what though St. Peter was commanded to feed the Sheep? other Apostles were as much bound to feed them as he; this gives him no Right to the Nations of the Earth; and 'tis no where said in the Bible, that the Bishop of Rome shall exercise Dominion in England, neither are there any Words, which carry a Sense equivalent to it. As for Prescription, he can have no Advantage over us by it; for it is a known and certain Rule, in Cases of Prescription, that the most Ancient must take the first Place; and if that be admitted, the Church of England's Right is antecedent to any Roman Claim: For the British Bishops (as appears from undoubted History) exercis'd Episcopal Jurisdiction in England, before ever the Supremacy of the Church of Rome was so much as heard of in the World: And for that Reason, when Austin, the Monk, was sent over by the Pope, the Monks of Bangor, and their Bishops, deny'd him this Jurisdiction, as being first possess'd of it under their Prince. And as for the Claim which mentions our Consent, as it was obtain'd by indirect Means, it is void in it self; the People have deny'd it, our Legislature has made many Laws against the Exercise of it, and our Queen is own'd and obey'd by all her Subjects, as Supreme in her Dominions; for no Foreign Power hath, or ought to have any Authority or Jurisdiction over us. As then the Scriptures give the Pope no Advantage over us, as no Prescription can be alledg'd on his Side, as no Consent can be pleaded in his Behalf, it must undeniably follow that he has none at all; that our Church is freed from his Yoke and Bondage, and our Land from his Tyranny: Our Bishops are only responsible to God and the Queen, for their Behaviour, and our People are deliver'd from his Jurisdiction; and as we are happy upon this Account, and congratulate one another's Deliverance from Popery, let us make it our Prayer, that the Pope may never find Means to gain the Ascendant any more amongst us; and neither by Conspiracies nor Factions, engage the Land on his Side, or set up Superstition and Idolatry: The more we maintain the Queen's Supremacy, and are obedient unto her, the safer we shall be in our Habitations, and the more secur'd from all such Innovations. *Honour all Men, love the Brotherhodd, fear God, honour the King.* Article XXXVII.

1 Pet. 2. 17.

V. This Supremacy reaches so far, that the Laws of the Land under her Execution, may put to Death Christian Men, for heinous and grievous Offences; for God allows her to punish Evil Doers, and to be a Praise of them that do well; to be a Terror to the Wicked, and an Encouragement to the Good: And since she must take Care of good Order, and provide for the Peace of the Community; if it so happens, that the Crimes of Men grow great and dangerous,

if

Article XXXVII. if they threaten Evil to others, and Mischief to the Society; if no Laws will restrain, and nothing but Severity will serve the Publick; she may take away the Life of Malefactors, and does well to cut them off from being mischievous to Mankind: God appointed her to Rule for the Good of others; and as he is for Government, and an orderly Conversation, he allows her to use the Sword, and will bless her, though Necessity forces her sometimes to cut off Evil Doers, and will establish her Throne by Righteousness and Justice. Were not such Severity sometimes us'd by the Magistrates, and a Check put upon the unruly Part of Mankind; Society, which was intended for mutual Advantage, would become dangerous, Men would degenerate into Brutes, scarce any could be safe, there would be Snares and Dangers, biting and devouring one another without Pity or Remorse. It is therefore, as it may happen, absolutely necessary, and in it self truly Christian, that Evil Men should be punish'd according to their Misdeeds, and that, if nothing else will keep the World in good Order and Peace, they should fall by the Sword of Justice, that others may fear, and do no more wickedly, that the Virtuous and Innocent may be protected and encourag'd, and go on in Safety, with Chearfulness in their Duty, and that the Community may be in Peace. *Rom. 13. 3.* *For Rulers are not a Terror to good Works, but to the Evil; wilt thou then not be afraid of the Power? do that which is Good, and thou shalt have Praise of the same.* But if this makes no Impression upon some Tempers, it follows, *He is a Revenger, to execute Wrath upon him that doth Evil:* to be severe according to the Nature of the Crime, to punish a little, if the Fault is small; to scourge with Wrath, if the Crime is greater; and if the Guilt be intolerable, and not to be allow'd in human Society, to slay the Offender, to execute him, as not worthy to live. This is the Power of the Queen, and though it is as much against a tender Nature as can be, to be so sharp; yet when Reason makes it necessary, it may lawfully be yielded to, as the best Expedient to preserve the Nation in Safety and Peace.

VI. Because there are Enemies to a Nation, who seek for Advantage against it, and would ruin the Trade and Plenty it enjoys, and undermine the Liberty in it, and enslave the People, and destroy the Religion, and set up Superstition and Idolatry in the Room of it: Because such Enemies happen to be many and mighty, who use Violence, and lie in Wait to destroy; therefore it is absolutely necessary for Christian Men, at the Commandment of the Magistrate, to wear Weapons, and to learn to use them, to serve in the Wars, and to be Commanders and Soldiers; for otherwise the Nation would be soon made a Prey, and our Enemies would soon Enslave and Ruin us: As therefore they think to use Force, there is no repelling them but by Force; and as they come with Intentions to lay Waste and Destroy, it must be lawful for Christians to fight against them, and lay Waste and Destroy them. This is that which the Passions of Men have made

made necessary, and what God allows, and there can be no Peace, and living in the World without it. And though we have some amongst us who pretend they may not use carnal Weapons, yet when they were in Danger in *Pensilvania*, Necessity taught them to arm out a Sloop, and to kill Men; and those with us enjoy their Habitations, Goods and Possessions, by the Blessing of God upon our Soldiers, who venture their Lives Abroad for us, that we may dwell in Safety, and enjoy our Religion and Estates, without Molestation. 'Tis then lawful for any Christian Men, when the Magistrate commands, to take up the Sword, and use it in Defence of the Queen and Nation; and let some say what they please, the same God that employs Kings to Reign, and appoints them their Governments, does authorize them to use the Sword, to wage War, and to destroy their Enemies. The Subjects are under Command, and must Arm when the Queen calls; and as she is the Judge of the Justice of her Cause, and we all know how reasonable it is to beat down her Enemies; we must acknowledge it the Subjects Duty to Fight, and to do their best in her Defence, and the Nation's Safety. As every Government upon Earth has an Inherent Right in it to preserve it self, and that cannot be done without Hands, and Hands will avail but little without Weapons; she may put the Sword into the Hands of her Captains and Soldiers, and may authorize them to Kill and lay Waste. This is so plainly seen in the Divine Management of the *Israelites*, and the Authority given to Christian Magistrates, that there can in Reason be no Scruple of Conscience raised, or made about it; for there is no Safety to be had, and no Security of Life and Possessions without it: Were all of some Mens Minds, we should sit still to be Enslav'd and Ruin'd; but as Self-Preservation would not allow a Man in his Primitive Capacity, to be so tamely slain, it will not allow a Community to perish, for want of Arms to support it: The *Centurion* was not upon his Conversion, commanded to lay his Sword aside; nor *Constantine* to throw away his; nor may any amongst us refuse to take it up, when our Safety, and the Safety of the Queen and Government depends upon it. *I Counsel thee to keep the King's Commandment, and that in regard of the Oath of God.* Eccles. 8. 2.

From this I shall but tell you, that we ought to be obedient and thankful.

1. We ought to be obedient to the Queen, the Supreme Magistrate, as set over us by Almighty God, and to submit our selves to them that are sent by her, for the good Government of the Land, that Truth and Peace may be continued amongst us, and we may still enjoy our Religion, and our Possessions, in Safety, and contribute by our Subjection, what we can, to our mutual Happiness and Comfort. As we are a Community, and subject to her Majesty's Authority, we are bound to set forward one another's Welfare, to study to be quiet, and to do our own Business, that we may be dutiful in our Places, and "submit to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's Sake. Put them in Mind to be subject to Principalties" Tit. 3. 1.

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good Work.

2. We have Reason to be thankful, that the Supreme Magistrate secures us from Popery and Slavery; that we are quiet, and at Peace amongst our selves, under her Majesty's mild Government; that we bear nothing of the Cruelty and Rage of the War, which others groan under; and that as yet we live as if we were the Care of Heaven; as well as her particular Charge. Were we thoroughly sensible of this, we should not only be thankful, but obedient, live as subject to the Laws of God, and of the Land, and endeavour as to please God in Newness of Life, so to be subject for Conscience Sake, that we may fill up our Places in all Righteousness, and rejoice before God in Innocency. For so is the Will of God, that with well doing ye put to Silence the Ignorance of foolish Men.

1 Pet. 2. 15.

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I COR. VII. 20.

**Let every Man abide in the same Calling,
wherein he was called.**

OUR Religion does not cancel natural Obligations, or licentiate any to become unjust or unnatural, unrighteous or unmerciful; but as it prescribes to every Relation particular Duties, it provides for every Man's Property and Sustenance, and enjoins all in their several Capacities, to be true and just in all their Dealings, kind and charitable in all their Stations, that every one may be content with their Place, provide Things honest before all Men, and adorn that State of Life they are in with all Righteousness and Goodness. **Let every Man abide in the same Calling, wherein he was called.**

Which may lead us to the Consideration of the Thirty Eighth Article of our Church, which says; "The Riches and Goods of Christians are not common, as touching the Right, Title, and Possession of the same, as certain Anabaptists do falsely boast: Notwithstanding every Man ought of such Things as he possesses, liberally to give Alms to the Poor, according to his Ability." Whence observe,

I. That private Possession of Goods is lawful, and consistent with Godliness. The Riches and Goods of Christians are not common, as touching the Right and Possession of the same, as certain Anabaptists boast: For the Christian Religion encourages no Levellers. Masters may keep Possession of what they have; Servants must be subject to their Masters; and may not think themselves equal to them. "Every Man is to abide in the Calling, wherein he is called. Art thou called being a Servant? Care not for it"; but submit to the Duty of a Servant.

II. Notwithstanding that Possessions are lawful, and the Master may retain his Dignity, and enjoy what he hath; yet it is every Man's Duty to be charitable, or liberally to give Alms to the Poor, according to his Ability.

III. The private Possession of Goods is lawful, and consistent with Godliness, as will appear, from those commendable Qualifications, which either get or secure Possessions; And from those ungodly Practices

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VICES, which are employ'd to deprive those that have Possessions of the same.

1. Those Qualifications are commended in Scripture, which either get or secure Possessions by lawful and proper Means, as honest Labour and Industry, and that Frugality and moderate Thriftiness, which bring Men to such Possessions.

Eph. 4. 28.

First, Honest Labour and Industry is commanded, encouraged, and commended in Scripture, by which Possessions are obtained and preserved. Thus we are obliged to work, to labour with our Hands, to provide Things honest, and to imitate the Industry and Care of other Creatures : For Labour is to gain Possession of what we want ; and when our Industry hath obtained it, we become the Owners and Proprietors of such Things ; and it is left to us to dispose of, or to preserve the same, as we see Cause. Our Religion allows of this Industry, obliges all Conditions of Men to use it, and hath thus laid a Foundation for our own proper Charity to build upon, and found the Way and the Means to prevent all Dishonesty, and Unrighteousness amongst us. *Let him that stole, steal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his Hands the Thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.*

Secondly, Moderate Frugality and Thriftiness is also approv'd of, and commended in Scripture, which of it self leads to Possessions, and enlarges them with Success. This is so far from being inconsistent with our Holy Religion, or discouraged by it, that it is made our Duty, and if we fail in it, we are expos'd to Contempt and Shame. Our Lord himself, when he had wrought a Miracle, left it to Frugality, to gather up the Fragments, that nothing might be lost, and did not think fit to preserve that by Miracle, which moderate Care might get together and use. And he hath enjoined Princes to take care of their Subjects ; Masters to provide for their Servants ; and Parents for their Children. And as he disapproves of the Prodigal, that wastes what he hath ; so he enjoins us to be prudent and frugal, discreet and thrifty, and to make Provision for our Selves and Families. He is not willing indeed that we should be over careful, and disturb or distract our selves about the Things of this Life : But in Reference to that, would have us depend upon his Providence and Blessing ; but if we can conquer all Solicitousness and anxious Thoughts, acquiesce in his Providence, and be contented with such Things as our Labour, and his Blessing upon it, may procure ; he is willing that we should be frugal and thrifty ; that we should gather up the Fragments, pick up the Crumbs under his Table, and provide for those that he commits to our Care and Management : And though the Prodigals of the Age may call this Parsimony, Covetousness, or by some other odious Name, it is no other than what is our Duty, and what may be minded with an humble and entire Submission to the Divine Providence and Blessing, with his Approbation and Encouragement.

encouragement. He would be counted a very bad Master, that did not provide Food and Raiment for his Servants; and he would be an unnatural Father, that does not take care of his Children. But how can the Master be good, or the Father provident, himself he takes care, and frugally manages his Concerns for the Welfare of all that are under him? These Things give in charge, that they may be blameless. But if any Man provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own House, he hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel. These ungodly Practices, that would deprive Men of what they have in Possession, are reproved, forbidden, and condemned in Scripture; and though in the first Times Christians did think it proper to have all Things in common, this was no Hindrance to Right in Possessions. Their Fault lay not in keeping Possession, but in keeping back Part of it, which was devoted to the Service of God, but in keeping back Part of it. All these ungodly Practices, that would deprive Men of their Possessions, are reproved, forbidden, and condemned in Scripture. Thus Christians are enjoined not to go beyond, drink, cheat any Man in any Matter; they may not be over-greedy, desirous of other Men's Goods; may not lie, extort, oppress, steal, or convert that to their own proper Use, which is another Man's, without the Owner's Consent and Approbation. Now if Possessions were not lawful, there could be no Covetousness, no Rapine, no Extortion, no Theft or Robbery, no Crime or Vice, in taking that which is another Man's. For the Immorality of all such Actions depends upon that Natural and Divine Law, by which every Man is empower'd to keep what he hath, to preserve it for his own, and others Use; and to divide it among his Children. And therefore as God hath threaten'd such Actions with his Displeasure, so he hath represented such as do such Things, as not fit to enter in to the Kingdom of Heaven; and puts a black and dreadful Character upon them. We may be sure, that as he hath given the Earth to the Children of Men, and parcell'd it out into divers Hands for their Benefit, he will not allow that one Man should disturb or dispossess another: We may be confident, that he is willing, that all should enjoy their Share, employ it carefully for those Ends he gave it; and with a contented Spirit partake of that, which is before them; for as he gave the Right, and maintains it, it cannot see how any can invade it without incurring his Displeasure, and the Danger of Damnation. Know ye not that the Unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God. Secondly, The Pretence that the Primitive Christians had all Things in common, does not diminish from this Right, or alienate Possessions. For though they did yield for that Time, that all Things should make up a common Stock, and in Expectation of Persecution, thought it the best Expedient they could use, to support the Church, and to be ready for all Usage: Yet this was their own voluntary Act;

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1 Tim. 5. 7, 8.

4. 2. 3. 4.

1 Cor. 6. 9, 10.

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was left to every Man's own particular Choice, and is not to be brought into Example. They thought they could not do better, than to expend what they had upon their Brethren, when they were under Dangers, and could not tell whether they should possess To-morrow what was in their Power to Day; and they might in a little Time be driven from House and Home. But in Times of Peace the Case alters; every one is left to consider his own Circumstances, and may do what he judges most convenient and necessary; may keep and retain, may give and bestow, as God shall enable, and as may best serve his Glory, and their own Safety. And this may be easily proved from the Case of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*; for what they had, was their own, and in their own Power to keep or to give; and before they devoted it to the Publick, no Man could deprive them of their Right to it: Their Fault lay not in keeping Possession before it was devoted to the Service of God, but in keeping back Part of it, when they had pretendably given it all to the Church. Had they never given it, they might have kept it; but in that they kept it after they had given it, as if they had repented of their Charity, or thought they could cheat the Apostles; it pleased God to punish them in that very severe Manner. For St. Peter himself tells them, *Whilst it remained, was it not thine own? And after it was sold, Was it not in thine own Power? Why hast thou conceived this Thing in thine Heart? Thine hast thou lied unto Men, but unto God.*

Acts 5. 4.

Notwithstanding Possessions are lawful, and every Man may thankfully keep and enjoy what he has; 'tis every Man's Duty, to give Alms of what he has, and to allow the Poor to partake of his Abundance: This giving to the Poor, supposes particular Possessions; yet such Possessions are not so peculiar, but such as have them, ought to be liberal and charitable, according to what they have. This giving to the Poor, supposes particular Possessions: For how can any Man properly be said to give of his own, if he does not possess any Thing as his own? Or how can the Poor receive any Alms, and count it their own, if they may not possess it as their own, when given to them, and convert it to their own Use? Take away Possessions, and at the same Time ye cancel all those Rules and Laws, by which ye are obliged to Beneficence and Charity; and therefore, as often as ye read of Alms, of Works of Charity, of Goodness, Kindness, and Love, as oft as ye are told of the Excellency of Charity, of the Promise of a Blessing upon it, and the Reward that attends it; ye may be satisfy'd that Possessions in particular Hands, are of great Use, without which no such Acts could be performed; and therefore we may be satisfied, that Possessions are lawful, that the Rich do not offend, in possessing what they have, and that the Poor need not envy them, or complain; for so it pleases God to scatter the Things of this Life, that all the World may

may depend upon himself, and Men upon one another; that the Rich may be under the Obligation to give, and the Poor to receive, and all may be dutiful, thankful and faithful; *But to do Good, and to Communicate, forget not; for with such Sacrifices God is well pleased.*

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Heb. 13. 16.

2. Such Possessions are not so peculiar; but that such as have them ought to be kind and charitable, and afford a Share to those that are in Want: Our Heavenly Father is pleas'd to set us an Example in this Case to follow; he is Lord of Heaven and Earth, and causes the Sun to shine, and to give Light and Heat to all, he produces Food and Raiment, and affords enough to Man and Beast, and allows such Plenty, that Rich and Poor may find enough for Sustenance, and praise his Name; thus he shows what we are to do, when he fills our Basket, and increases our Store: Thus by the Bounty we live upon, he provokes us to be eminent in good Works; if he withholds his Hand, we want, pine and die; how can we withhold ours, when those of the same Blood may starve and perish? It cannot be pretended, that, because he gives more to one than to another, the rest which are his Workmanship, and as much beloved, should be neglected; nor can it be thought reasonable, that because he fills one Man's Barns with Fruits of the Earth, another's Belly should want; or that, because one Man's Table is full, and his Cup does overflow, another should want the Crumbs which fall from his Table: As he has in his Wisdom made this unequal Distribution, it was for our Trial, that every one may consider the Opportunities he has of doing Good; and as we live upon the Bounty of God, so we may be charitable, and imitate his Goodness, disperse Abroad, and give to the Poor, that our Righteousness and good Temper may remain for ever, and he may bless us in the Day of Judgment, saying; *Come ye blessed Children of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World; for I was an Hungred, and ye gave me Meat, I was Thirsty, and ye gave me Drink, a Stranger, and ye took me in, Naked, and ye clothed me.*

Matth. 25. 34.

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Matth. 25. 34.

From hence let me advise those that live in Plenty to be charitable, those in Poverty to be content; and all, to abhor that leveling Principle, which tends to the Disturbance of all Possessions, and the Destruction of Society and Mankind.

1. Those in Plenty, must count it their Duty to be charitable; that as God has been bountiful to them, they may relieve his Servants, that bear his Image, and make some grateful Returns in that Way, to that Providence that has been so indulgent towards them; "The Poor ye have always with you"; that ye may never want Objects of Charity, or Opportunities to relieve: And our Saviour advises us, "To make to our selves Friends by the Mammon of Unrighteousness; that when we fail, they may receive

" us

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1 Tim. 6. 18,
19.

"us into Eternal Habitations". And however loth Men may be to spare from their Lusts, or to deny themselves, that they may have the greater Plenty to impart to others; yet all that is spent upon Lust and Vaniry, is lost, and may aggravate in the Day of Judgment; but all that is expended upon the Poor, is treasur'd up against that Day, and will be found to the Praise and Glory of God: At present it is call'd a Sacrifice, acceptable to God, and well-pleasing to him; but then it will be our Joy, and Crown of Rejoicing. Charge them that are Rich, that they do Good, that they be rich in good Works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good Foundation for the Time to come, that they may lay hold on Eternal Life.

2. This may prevail with the Poor to be contented; and since it is the good Pleasure of Almighty God, to put them in a mean Condition, to submit with Patience and Humility to it; for he knows what is best for every Man, and can chuse that State of Life for them which is safest: Be not then cast down or dispirited, but say, The Will of the Lord be done, let him deal with us as he pleases; since he gives me no Riches, blessed be his Name. I shall not be answerable for that Talent, and I will not disgrace my Poverty by Vice; I will be pious and virtuous, I will be sober and temperate; I will fear God and please him, though I am Poor, and will strive to be Rich towards God, to lay up my Treasures in Heaven, and will look for my Habitation above, an House not built with Hands, Eternal in the Heavens. Could I persuade you to be thus modest and humble, thus contented and satisfied, thus Dutiful and Religious, the poorest of you might be Rich in the Kingdom of Heaven, and ye would have no Cause to use that wicked Proverb, that "the Poor God hates"; for he loves you all, waits for your Amendment, calls upon you to return, and is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance. For Godliness with Contentment is great Gain; for we brought nothing into the World, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. If ye look among the Graves and Bones, ye cannot tell the Rich from the Poor, or the Poor from the Rich.

1 Tim. 6. 6,
7.

3. We should detest that levelling Principle, which would ruin Society and Mankind; for under the Pretence of Religion, there were some in former Days, that declar'd it was Christian to have all Things common, and every Man should be equal to another: The Anabaptists publish this as their Doctrine, and at the end of our Civil Wars, the same was reviv'd; but it carries such an ugly Aspect, and is so pernicious, that our Anabaptists disown it, and with the rest of the Dissenters, subscribe this Article, and declare they have a Right and Title to that which is their own: We may take heed that we are not misguided with such Fancies any more; that

that we may live in Peace amongst our selves, enjoy our Properties without Molestation, and do Good with what we have in our Generations. But whose hath this World's Goods, and seeth his Brother have Need, and shutteth up his Bowels of Compassion from him; how dwelleth the Love of God in him? My little Children, let us not love in Words, neither in Tongue, but in Deed, and in Truth.

Article XXXVIII

1 John 3. 17, 18.

The first Part of the first Article is, that we may live in Peace amongst our selves, enjoy our Properties without Molestation, and do Good with what we have in our Generations. But whose hath this World's Goods, and seeth his Brother have Need, and shutteth up his Bowels of Compassion from him; how dwelleth the Love of God in him? My little Children, let us not love in Words, neither in Tongue, but in Deed, and in Truth.

As we read in the first Article, that we may live in Peace amongst our selves, enjoy our Properties without Molestation, and do Good with what we have in our Generations. But whose hath this World's Goods, and seeth his Brother have Need, and shutteth up his Bowels of Compassion from him; how dwelleth the Love of God in him? My little Children, let us not love in Words, neither in Tongue, but in Deed, and in Truth.

ARTICLE

I. Vain and rash swearing is forbidden by our Lord Jesus Christ, and James his Apostle. II. The Christian Religion does not prohibit, but that a Man may swear, when the Magistrate requires, in a Cause of Faith and Conscience. III. An Oath is taken, and be according to the Prophet's Teaching, in Justice, Judgment, and Truth.

I. Vain and rash swearing is forbidden by our Lord Jesus Christ, and James his Apostle. When Men upon mean and trifling Occasions, without any Provocation that may justify it, or any just Reason which may allow it, presume to swear by their Maker, or by the Holy Ghost, by the Sacrament, or by their Faith, or by any other Particular; and repeat their Oaths with Eager-ness, being

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ARTICLE XXXIX.

JEREM. IV. 2. The first Part.

And thou shalt swear, the Lord liveth, in Truth, in Judgment, and in Righteousness.

AS God is the Great and Supreme Majesty of Heaven and Earth, is present every where, knoweth all Things, and overruleth all Affairs; as he alone is able to try and search the Heart, to bring to light the hidden Works of Darkness, and to punish Evil-doers, in an astonishing and surprizing Manner; upon the Account of the Vastness of his Knowledge and Power, he is appeal'd to, as the Searcher of all Hearts, solemnly invoc'd to observe what is done, and sworn by, as alone able to vindicate the Truth, and to punish in just Judgment, those that wilfully deviate or swerve from it. **And thou shalt swear, the Lord liveth, in Truth, in Judgment, and in Righteousness.** Which may lead us to the Thirty Ninth Article, which treats of a Christian Man's Oath, and declares,

"As we confess that vain and rash Swearing is forbidden Christian Men by our Lord Jesus Christ, and *James* his Apostle;
"so we judge that Christian Religion doth not prohibit, but that
"a Man may swear, when the Magistrate requireth, in a Cause of
"Faith and Charity: So it be done according to the Prophet's
"Teaching, in Justice, Judgment, and Truth". Here then,

- I. Vain and rash Swearing is forbidden by our Lord Jesus Christ, and *James* his Apostle.
- II. The Christian Religion does not prohibit, but that a Man may swear, when the Magistrate requires, in a Cause of Faith and Charity.
- III. An Oath so taken, must be according to the Prophet's Teaching, in Justice, Judgment, and Truth.

I. Vain and rash Swearing is forbidden Christian Men by our Lord Jesus Christ, and *James* his Apostle. When Men upon mean and trifling Occasions, without any Provocation that may justify it, or any just Reason which may allow it, presume to swear by their Maker, or by the Heavens, by the Sacrament, or by their Faith, or by any other Particular; and repeat their Oaths with Eagerness,
being

being willing to make them pass for Sense, or to supply the Room of it. Their Swearing is vain and rash, impertinent and idle, not fit for the Hearing of a sober Man, much less for the Hearing of the Almighty God, who is of purer Eyes than to behold, and of Ears than to hear such Iniquity with Approbation. It is so unbecoming a Man, so injurious to the Soul, and scandalous in Conversation, that it may be wondered how Men of common Sense should allow of it; much more may it be admired, that Men of the best and sublimest Parts, who may distinguish themselves enough by their Reason, should be so far infatuated, as to mix it in their daily Discourse, and should esteem it an Embellishment and Excellency in Conversation. And thus we may see into, if we but consider, that such rash and vain Swearers must either intend to gain Credit by their Oaths, or to appear great and singular; either to put their Words into a fashionable Dress, or to humour the Company they keep. If they swear upon any of these Accounts, they are rash and vain in their Oaths, and idle and impertinent, they neither act like Men, nor Christians. If they swear to gain Credit, they fall short of their End: For who will believe the Man that swears much, or recommends his Discourse with an Oath? The Major Part of Men as yet, have still an Aversion against it, that they had rather hear good Reasons without it, and will sooner submit to plain Arguments, than to such prophane Language. But if they thus intend Credit to themselves, it must be either for their Reasons, or their Passions; but solid Reason is more convincing in its own native Brightness, and loses some of its Force, when attended with such furious Words; and as for Passion, it is bad enough usually in it self, they need not make it worse, or raise it by such Additions. But the Credit is so inconsiderable that is thus gained, that common Swearers are pitied by the Pious, and despised by others; and the more they swear, the more they are suspected: For when they muster up such Hellish Forces most daringly, it is observ'd that they design to frighten the timorous, to cheat the surprized, to defraud the rest, and to do most Mischief. But of all Men, they take the wrong Way to be credited. For how can such Oaths be believed, which they do not believe themselves, and which are as frequently violated and broken, as uttered; when he that uttered them over Night, forgets them the next Day? Or if he recollects them, trembles to perform them; nay, when he that babbles them out in one Hour, swears the contrary in the next Moment, and perjures himself by his own Presumption. This is so far from gaining Credit, that it lessens the Man in his general Esteem, vilifies his Person and Parts, and degrades him so much, that he is fit for no Company, but the Meanest, and the Dregs of the World. And as Swearing seldom goes alone, but hath Cursing for its Companion, it lies the heavier upon the Reputation and Conscience of the Man; and unless he sees into his Sin, may verify the Tragedy, which he threatens to others, upon his own Person: And such by dying without Repentance, may find themselves damned, according to their own dreadful Imprecations and Wishes. It had been more creditable and safe to have obeyed

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XXXIX.Matt. 5. 34.
35, 36, 37.

ed our Saviour. But I say unto you, swear not at all; neither by Heaven, for it is God's Throne; nor by the Earth, for it is his Footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the City of the great King; neither shalt thou swear by thy Head, because thou canst not make one Hair white or black; but let your Communication be yea, yea; nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil.

2. This vain and rash Swearing may be used, to appear great and terrible, to frighten the Pious, and amaze the serious. For some Men, who have nothing to commend them, do thus think to make themselves known; or if they are remarkable upon no other Accounts, pretend to be thus considerable: They fancy that an Oath now and then sounds well from their Lips, and gives Authority and Force to what they say. As if a hard Word was more commanding than Sense, or a bold Oath of greater Force than Reason. They observe that others are more swayed by Passion, than governed by Consideration; and they had rather raise up Fear and Terror, than Argument and Conviction. But do these act at the same Time like Men or Beasts, do they speak like Christians, or roar like Lions? Which would be more becoming or more acceptable, a solid Reason, or a vain Oath? Would it not be more agreeable to their Station and Pretences to speak like rational Men, and to offer solid Arguments, than to appear like Furies, and bellow out the Language of Hell? And however they may frighten the weak and timorous, the wiser Sort will but despise them for their Impudence, and the Pious bewail them: For they but strive to terrify others with that, which will prove most terrible to themselves, and to leave them with that which will bring their Damnation. For as much as they swagger with their Oaths upon Earth, there is one that heareth how bold they are with his Sacred Name, and hath resolved to punish them according to their Prophaneness: For it is he that says, *Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless, that taketh his Name in vain.*

Exod. 20. 7.

3. Some may be so vain as to swear merely to be in the Mode, and to shew that they can be as bold and daring in their Discourse, as the prophaneest in the Age. 'Tis sad when Wickedness must combine to make a Fashion, and Prophaneness undertakes to dictate what Language is proper for a Gentleman; as if the Devil was to govern, and not God; or as if Men feared more to be out of the Mode, than to offend their Lord. But if Men should dress as they usually speak, and were as many monstrous Appearances in Garb, as they fill up their Discourse with Prophaneness, they might soon be ashamed of their Fashions, and speak more rationally. What would be more ridiculous, than to be dress'd up with the Pictures of Devils? And what more ridiculous, than to fill up the Discourse with their Language? As if the worst of Spirits were in the Heart, and managed the Tongue: Or, why should they be more ashamed to carry their Resemblance in their Cloaths, when they give them the Heart, and swear and curse as if they had the sole disposal of their Souls?

Souls? It must then be more proper for Men to speak rationally, and to use that Sobriety which God hath commanded, than to mix Rebellion against him in their Words, and to defy his Power. Such Bravery must down, which exalts it self against the most High; and all the Pride of Heart, and Thunder of Words, must come to nought. What Man would speak Treason to humour the Discourse and Fashion of Traitors? And how can it be safe to utter Treason against Heaven, merely to please prophane Men, or to gratify the Vanity of being in the Mode? It is indeed impossible, that Oaths should be acceptable to any pious Ear. But the Fire and Brimstone which is so belched forth, and scattered in Conversation, cannot scorch or burn them: The Fury of it is conceal'd till the Great Day, when it shall kindle in the Consciences of the Prophane, burn them with unspeakable Pain, and meet those eternal Flames, which shall be their Torment for ever; where, perhaps they may swear in Earnest, as they do now in Jest, and curse one another to all Eternity. If the modish Discourse of the Age leads to such Torments, what Treasures of Wrath do common Swearers treasure up against that Day? And what must be their Portion? Much better had it been for them to have taken St. James's Advice: *But above all Things, my Brethren, swear not, neither by Heaven, nor by the Earth, nor by any other Oath; but let your Yea be Yea, and your Nay, Nay, lest ye fall into Condemnation.*

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Jan. 5. 12.

4. Some may be so poor spirited, as to swear to humour Company, to imitate a Friend, and to shun Singularity. But what can be more idle and silly, than for a Man to prefer the Pleasure of the Company, before the Favour of God, and the Testimony of a good Conscience? It is meer Folly to bespeak the Favour of Companions, by speaking as prophanelly as they, or to court their Applause and Commendation, by committing the same Fault with them. A Man had better be alone, than learn to sin with the Multitude; and will find more Satisfaction from himself, than from the Friendship of the wicked. For no Company can licentiate that which God forbids; And all the Mirth that the witty Discourse of the Prophane can raise, cannot compensate the black Guilt of Oaths intermixed with it. That Interest in Company, in vain Company, is too mean to be so dearly bought with the Loss of our Innocency; and that Credit in Conversation is a small Satisfaction, which is attended with such Prophaneness. There is nothing to be gained by such Companions, who walk in the broad way to Destruction, but Ruin. And however apt some are to imitate the worst Part of Conversation; he that guards his Words, speaks rationally, and discourses fully, according to the Point in hand, without such daring Expressions, is the wiser Man, will be more valued, and experience the best Friendship; will not only please God and retain his Integrity, but will be more respected and regarded than others. *A fool uttereth all his Mind, but a wise Man keepeth it in till afterwards. Seest thou a Man that is hasty in his Words, there is more Hope of a Fool than of him.*

Prov. 29. 11.
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II. The Christian Religion does not prohibit but that a Man may swear, when the Magistrate requires, in a Cause of Faith and Charity; when Evidence is to be given; and an Oath may secure the Credit, Liberty, and Life of others. When Faith may be had to what is testified, Charity may thereby do good, and Strife may be ended. An Oath, when the Magistrate demands it, is an Appeal to God, whereby we promise all Duty and Allegiance, or declare what we know is true, that the Law may take Place, Transgressors may be punished, or the Innocent delivered; and such an Appeal to him, who knoweth all Things, is sometimes necessary, and what we Christians may make. For as it is the solemnest Invocation of the Deity, which the Magistrate and others believe to be made in Sincerity, as Men fear him, and dread his Wrath; it is the best Expedient that can be thought of, to find out the Truth in Matters of Fact or Right; and without it, it would be impossible for the Magistrate to judge righteously, and to pass Sentence according to the Truth. It is confessed that some wicked Men may presume to swear falsely, and may do what lies in them to misguide Judgment: But as Men usually reverence an Oath, according to the Fear they have of God, and are cautious how they swear, as they value their own Souls; we are bound in Charity to believe, that when they swear before a Magistrate, they swear in Truth: And if any do otherwise, by one Means or other they are suspected, and cannot injure the Community so much, as an Oath in Sincerity may do good to it. Such an Evil must be born with for a greater Good; for the Magistrate cannot rule in Safety, and judge between Man and Man, without the Assistance of an Oath; though sometimes Men are forsworn, and the Subject cannot be secure in his Goods or Life, unless it be given sometimes for the Preservation of Both. And therefore Moses enjoined the Jews to use it, when Necessity so required. *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his Name.*

Deut. 6. 13.

III. An Oath so taken must be according to the Prophet's Teaching, in Justice, Judgment and Truth; and every one that gives it, must be well assur'd, that it be in Truth, according to the plain and real Fact; in Judgment, according to the best of his Knowledge, and the truest Judgment he can make of what he knows, or heard, or saw; and in Righteousness, without Partiality, Favour or Affection, that Righteousness may take Place, and Justice may be done: Thus doing, Faith and Charity may be pursued, the Ends of Government may be obtain'd, Veneration for an Oath may be preserv'd, and Righteousness and Peace may flourish in the Land, and all the happy Consequences of Swearing in the Fear of God, may be obtain'd. 'Tis true, a false Oath may be more injurious to another, than Deceit, Rapine, or Theft; but there is so much Care taken to prevent such Mischief, and such signal Punishments have been inflicted upon false Swearers, by Divine Judgment, and Man's Severity, that it is, I presume, but very seldom that an Oath

Oath is, for it build, or proves so injurious: However, Vif Men will Swear falsely, and will dare the Almighty to strike them Dead, this does not lessen the Value of an Oath, or the Advantage that is daily had by it; for when it is given in the Fear of God, it may secure the Estate, preserve our Liberty, and save the Life; it may direct Judges to determine that which is just between Man and Man, and uphold the Laws of a Nation, and maintain its Happiness and Peace; and as this has been allowed in all Nations, where the Power of God is feared, our Religion allows it: For Men rarely Swear by the greater, and an Oath for Confirmation, is to them an end of all Strife. Article XXXIX
Heb. 6. 16. 17

By this ye may see how impertinent common Swearing is: How frivolous their Exceptions are, that refuse to Swear before a Magistrate; and how careful we should be to speak as Christians.

1. Common Swearing is very idle and impertinent, rash and vain, it does no manner of Good in Discourse, and can give no Credit to it; a good Man can be believ'd without it, and a bad Man, or a Liar, cannot by all this Prophaneness, remove the Suspicion of a Lie from him: It is neither fit to be mix'd with Truth, nor with Falshood; for its Company discredits Truth, and renders Falshood impudent: The Man that uses it, cannot help himself by it; for as all his Oaths cannot change his Features, or make his Hair white or black; they cannot better his Condition, enrich his Habitation, or enlarge his Wisdom. None but rash, heady Men, would make themselves notorious for such Expressions; and such as can make themselves famous for nothing else, had better never been born; for they that Swear often, must needs be Forsworn often; and that Guilt that is multiplied every Day, must needs be dreadful in the End. *Ye shall not Swear by my Name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the Name of thy God; I am the Lord.* Levit. 19. 12.

2. Their Exceptions are frivolous, who refuse to Swear before a Magistrate; for because they may not Swear in common Discourse, they will not Swear at all; as if God had as strictly forbidden it before a Magistrate, as in common Conversation; whereas God allows it in Truth, Judgment and Righteousness; but forbids it, when a *yea*, and a *nay* may do as well, and prove as satisfactory. But to show the Weakness of these Men, they will not Swear before a Magistrate themselves; and yet in a Cause of their own, they shall *Sub-pœna*, and oblige others to Swear in their Behalf before a Magistrate: Whereas if it be a Sin to Swear at all, why will they oblige others to Sin, to serve their Cause? But I need not insist upon this their Mistake, when they themselves will call upon the Almighty, and as in his Presence give their Testimony; which is as great an Oath without the Formality of it, as can be taken. If this will not reclaim them, I hope they are not holier than St. Paul, who thus says; *I say the Truth in Christ, I lie not, my Conscience also bearing me Witness in the Holy Ghost.* Rom. 9. 1.

3. We

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Prov. 10:19.

3. We ought to be very careful to speak as Christians, and to Discourse with one another with Sobriety, and the Fear of God, that we may lay aside all that Vanity of Words, which but offend Pious Ears, and increase Guilt. We may as well gain Credit to our Affirmations and Denials as others, and our Yea may be as much valuable, our Nay as much a Denial, as if we us'd more solemn Asseverations: We discredit our selves by our Words, and lose the Reputation of Truth by receding from it: Were we always wary, we might establish our Words, and what we say, might be believ'd. *In the Multitude of Words there wanteth not Sin: but he that refraineth his Lips, is wise.*

By this we may see how important common Swearing is: How frivolous their Expositions are, that refuse to swear before a Magistrate; and how careful we should be to speak as Christians.

1. Common Swearing is very idle and impertinent, and vain, it does no manner of Good in Discourse, and can give no Credit to it: a good Man can be believ'd without it, and a bad Man, or a Man that is not a Christian, cannot be believ'd with Truth. It is a mark of a Fool, that he is so much in love with Truth, that he will not speak without it: for his Company discards Truth, and renders it almost impossible. The Man that uses it, cannot help himself, for as all his Oaths cannot change his Nature, or make his Heart more of black: they cannot change his Condition, or make his Speech more of black. None but a Fool, or a Man that is not a Christian, will make himself notorious for such Expositions: and such as can make themselves famous for nothing else, but for never being sworn; for they that swear often, must needs be sworn often, and that Oath that is repeated every Day, must needs be daily in the Mouth. If you will not swear by any Name, neither shall I.

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2. Their Expositions are frivolous, who refuse to swear before a Magistrate: for because they may not swear in common Discourse, they will not swear at all; as if God had as strictly forbidden before a Magistrate, as in common Conversation; whereas God has allowed it in a lawful Judgement and Righteousness: but I should not say so, if I saw any do so well, and prove so honest, as those that to know the Weakness of their Minds, they will not swear before a Magistrate: and yet in a Court of Justice, they will swear upon the Oath, and oblige others to swear to their Oaths before a Magistrate: Whereas if it be a Sin to swear at all, why will they oblige others to swear to their Oaths? and if I need not make upon this their Mistake, which they themselves will call upon the Authority, and as in his Presence we have Testimony: yet it is as great an Oath, whose the Authority of it, as can be taken. If this will not restrain them, I hope they are not holier than we. If this will not restrain them, I hope they are not holier than we. If this will not restrain them, I hope they are not holier than we.

Article 1. And certain, without the help of Argument, the full Apprehension of our Minds, that we know they are true

An Additional Explanation to the latter Part of the First ARTICLE.

For there are Three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these Three are One.

THE Doctrine concerning the Blessed Trinity, was, in the first Ages, unanimously received by the Catholick Church, which had the best Opportunities to inform her self of the true Meaning of Scripture, and to fix those ways of Expression, which might be safely used by the following Generations. We can have no just Cause therefore to renounce those establish'd Terms, commonly used by her, and to embrace those new ones, which Fancy has suggested, or Interest made current. This is a Mystery so sublime, and so much plac'd above the Reach of the most aspiring Understanding; that a pregnant Fancy cannot, without Danger, become florid in representing it, and a great Wit may not pretend to Fathom it, without Presumption; We must stand at a Distance from the Glory of it, and receive the Discovery which Revelation has condescended to make, with Admiration; for no better will be allowed us, after our Closest Consideration, and most diligent Enquiries: And that we may acquiesce with that, I will endeavour to show, that such ways of Expression as have been commonly used in the Church, in the Three Creeds, and Thirty Nine Articles of our Religion, are not contrary to the genuine Maxims of right Reason, the Excellency of the Divine Nature, and the Revelation that has been made concerning it in the Holy Scriptures.

I. The natural Maxims of right Reason, when clearly attended to in their Places, are not contrary to the most Holy Trinity, as is so loudly asserted; for it is most certain, that right Reason is ignorant of its own Essence, that it is bounded with certain Limits, which it may not pass without danger of mistaking; that it is dangerous to apply that, which we find true within the Compass of our Minds, to that which is plac'd above their Reach; that the Notions of that which is within the Compass of our Reason, are to be carefully distinguish'd from those imperfect Guesses that are made concerning that, which is above them. These Assertions are so agreeable to the

Article 1. the first Apprehension of our Minds, that we know they are true and certain, without the help of Argument.

1. Right Reason is ignorant of its own Essence, and cannot comprehend it self; much less is it able to inform us exactly, what the Essence of God is, who is far above Reason, and more remote from the Knowledge of it, than it self can be: We imagine it is of the Nature of Light, because it discovers Truth to us; but we are at a loss to describe what sort of Light it is; and though every one shares in it, all are ignorant how it shines into the Understanding, and informs the Soul of that which is reasonable: We are sensible the Principles of it are constantly present in the Mind; but when we employ them, we know not from whence they come, or whither they go: We call them up for Use by thinking, and when we have spent our Time, and Strength, in the most abstracted Contemplation, we cannot express what this Reason is which has entertain'd us, and led us forward from one Thought to another: We fancy it is an Irradiation of the Supreme Reason; but we can no more tell, what that Irradiation is, or how it descends from above, and makes an Impression upon our Souls, than we can discover that Union, which keeps Soul and Body together.

Now if we are thus ignorant of the Nature of Reason, by which we View and Measure all other Things, how is it possible for any Man Living, to set forth the Essence of God, who is the supreme and most perfect Reason? If we cannot comprehend the less, how can we positively describe the greater? If our Souls are too weak to look inwards, and set forth their own Native Light; how can they look upwards, and survey that Light; to which no mortal Eye can approach? "What Man knoweth the Things of a Man, save the Spirit of a Man that is in him? Even so the Things of God knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of God". And if that Spirit of a Man, that knows best what is in Man, is ignorant of its own Essence; it must remain ignorant of the Divine Essence, till better Information is given by Revelation. But if any are so vain as to pretend to an Ability, by which they can acquaint us with the Essence of Reason; would it not be strange to assert, that there are as many Essences of Reason, as there are Men and Angels that partake of it? For we are sensible, that true Reason is but one in all Men, and in all rational Agents; and though a Measure of it is communicated unto all, it remains in it self but one and the same Reason all the World over; as is found by Experience, when Men of different Nations converse, and their natural Notions are compared: And if such a vast Number of Creatures can share in one and the same Reason, why should it be thought so absurd, when Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are represented, as enjoying the same Reason, and yet remaining Three distinct Persons? 'Tis in vain for our little Thoughts to plead, that it is impossible, unless we can display to View the Essence of our own Reason, and discover fairly wherein the Impossibility lies.

2. Right Reason is bounded within certain Limits, which it may not pass without danger of mistaking; the Light which attends it, is contracted within a very narrow Compass, beyond which it cannot certainly discern any Thing: When contented to contemplate within its own Sphere; it may conclude with Safety, and convince with Judgment; but passing farther, and borrowing Representations from Fancy, it leads into the Dark, presenting Things to us in a very imperfect Manner. Thus we can Discourse properly of that which is obvious to Sense, and agreeable to the Laws of natural Conscience; of that which is brought down to our View by Revelation, and fitted to our Capacities: But if we expatiate and wander further after that which is hidden, and retir'd from human Thought, we labour in vain to inform our selves, and can only guess haply, or represent that under borrow'd Allusions, as plain and certain, which we strongly but imagine to be so. We can be assured, that what we see before us, has a Being; but we cannot trace backwards into the Recesses of Nature, and produce the peculiar and proper Methods, by which every Thing was Organiz'd, and inform'd with such a Spirit. We know that we are Men, that we can Think, Discourse, and Judge; but are wholly ignorant how we came to be Spirits in Flesh, or how our Souls were united to our Bodies, and we became Rational; and if we look upwards, we are as much streighten'd in our Thoughts, and at a Loss to proceed. We are very apprehensive that there is a God, a Supreme Reason, and a Perfect Being; but find it impossible for our narrow Capacities, to represent him perfectly as he is: We can Discourse of his immense Perfections at a Distance, as they are allow'd to fall under our Cognizance, or within reach of our Reason; but we are wholly ignorant of the Remainder, and must be so, unless he himself thinks fit to discover more unto us by a Revelation: We may as well pretend to enlarge the Faculties of our Souls beyond their natural Vigour, as undertake to comprehend the Essential Perfections of the Deity: Our Minds ought to be as capacious, as that is in itself, before they can be able to give a full, compleat, and perfect Account of it; and at this Rate, we must be Gods our selves, before we can tell in Perfection what God is: But we are but Men, and can discern no more, than what our limited Reasons, guided by Revelation, may suggest.

3. It is dangerous, without doubt, to apply that, which we find true within the Compass of our Minds, to that which is known to be plac'd above their Reach; for what falls under our Knowledge, is fitted to our Reason; but what lies beyond it, must be surveyed by a greater Light, than what at present we are allow'd to enjoy. If therefore we find it true, that Three cannot be One, as Things appear to Sense, and as created Beings are represented to our Understandings; we may not conclude from thence, that Three cannot be One in the Deity: For tho' it is undeniable, that Three created Beings cannot be One, as they fall under our Knowledge; there is no Consequence, that it must be as true in Things that are placed

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above

Article I. above us, and which according to the Limitations of our Faculties, we cannot be allow'd to comprehend. There is a natural Necessity, that Three cannot be One according to Sense, and the Notions that are properly fix'd upon Created Beings; for that which is Created is terminated, and that which has its own Limitations, cannot be another, unless we can conceive that Three distinct Extensions can be One Extension. But as demonstrable as this is in Created Beings, we proceed too fast, when we fix the same Notion upon the great Creator, and pretend that there cannot be Three Persons, and One Essence. Could we frame as proper and distinct Conceptions of him, as we do of our Fellow-Creatures, we might be positive; but being satisfy'd, that he is in Essence above our Knowledge, we ought to forbear applying the Notions we have pick'd up from Created Beings, to his Great Self: For by this way of arguing, we may as well conceive that he is imperfect, and finite, and has no more Excellency, than what we can strictly consider, and take the full Dimensions of; nay, we do in Effect bring him down to our own Scantling, and judge of him, not as he is the Almighty God, but as he is the Image and Representation of a Deity, which our little Thoughts have set up, or rather our Imaginations have drawn. We should think it a ridiculous Attempt in any accomplish'd Mathematician, that undertakes, with the help of his Telescope, to describe the Vehicles and Motions of flying Angels, because we are of Opinion that those Spirits are more refin'd, than to come under the Observation of the most ingenious Artists. And it is no less impertinent in any, that fix those Notions which belong to material Objects, or Created Beings, upon the most Holy, Spiritual and Supreme Deity; he being vastly different from Material or Finite Beings, and not to be set forth fairly by such Representations; for that may be very true in the Creature, which is not, and cannot be true in him.

4. The Notions of that which is within the Compass of our Reason, are to be distinguish'd carefully from those imperfect Guesses that may be wittily made concerning that which is in it self above it; This done, a little Modesty will induce us to be more cautious in our Expressions about the Essence of Things, and wary, lest we should assert that dogmatically, concerning this most abstruse Mystery, which is only true in that, which is obvious to Sense, or adapted to Created Beings. For as the blind Man, upon Recovery of his Sight, fancied he saw Men walking as Trees, before ever he deliberately consider'd what Trees were, or how Men cou'd walk like them; we may, upon every flash of Reasoning, confound our Notions of Things, and fix that upon the Nature of God, which is peculiar to the Creature; unless we can be perswaded to distinguish carefully between that which belongs to Created Beings, and that which is peculiarly adapted to the incomprehensible Nature of God. If this Distinction is not made, the most towering Wits may make ingenious Mistakes, and fall in Love with those pretty Conceptions they entertain, which are quite contrary to the Nature of Things. It would be an unpardonable fault in Reasoning, to represent and define Matter, as if

if it were Spirit, or to defend those false Conceptions of Spirit which are peculiar to Matter; but it would be much more gross to measure the Supreme Spirit of all by the one or the other. Article I.

For this Reason I can imagine, our Adversaries will not applaud the Invention of that Philosopher, which confounds the great Creator with the Powers of Matter, and describes him, as if he was Co-essential with it; nor can we commend our Adversaries Contrivance, by which they measure the Divinity which is uncreated, by Notions peculiar to Created Beings. The dullest Matter may afford very proper Rules and Notices to judge of Matter by. We may, by the Whole, judge of the Parts, and by the Parts conceive sight of the whole. And the Reason of Created Spirits may agree in some common Principles, by which they may survey the Faculties and Obligations that are put upon them. But it is far beyond the Power of Matter, or limited Reason, to afford any proper Notions, which may set forth the Perfections of the Deity entirely or adequately to us. 'Tis more agreeable to true Argument, to judge of Things by their own peculiar Works, and in every Speculation to find out those Notices that are proper to attend unto, and proceed by, that the Nature of different Things may not be confounded by our impertinent and weak Management; and a Chimerical Representation, doated upon by a pregnant Fancy, pass for real. Would we consult true Reason in this Manner, and as well consider the Limitations of it, as its own Ignorance of it self, there would appear no such Aversion against the Holy Trinity; that Mystery being plac'd in an higher Station than what can be fully search'd out by us. 'Tis confess'd it is contradictory to Sense, that Three Bodies should be One; and to the Nature of a Created Spirit, that Three Spirits should be One Spirit; but yet our Reason dares not conclude, that there is no Trinity in the Divinity; for that is of such a transcendent Nature, that our greatest Intellectual Powers cannot consider it, and for ought we know, it may be true, and agreeable to the infinite Perfections that are fix'd in it; for as it is uncreated, it must be unintelligible, till it condescends to discover it self more familiarly to our Understandings, and to describe that more plainly, which as yet we cannot comprehend. We have clearly seen, that Reason, which is so oft appeal'd to, and magnify'd in this Controversy, is directly against that Positiveness, which disowns the Trinity, and declines those ways of Expression commonly used in the Church. I shall now proceed to show, that,

II. The Excellency of the Divine Nature does not render it incredible, that there should be a Trinity of Persons that communicate in it; for that sublime Excellency is so great, that it surpasses our Understandings to comprehend it: This Excellency is only known to it self, according to its own own Divine Greatness; a Trinity in it can be no Diminution to its Excellency, though some inquisitive Men conceive it to be so; for no natural Idea of this Divine Excellency, which is engraven upon Man's Heart, or form'd by true Reasoning, can be brought with Strength against the Notion of it. These Prin-

Article I. A ciples are clear enough in themselves, and may justify the Faith of any that own the Holy Trinity, as reveal'd.

bo. I. The Excellency of the Divine Nature is so great, that it surpasses our Understandings, and cannot be comprehended by us; as may be prov'd from the concurrent Testimonies of all Ages, and the ingenuous Confession of our Adversaries themselves. All acknowledge that the Glory of God is infinite, and his pure Essence incomprehensible. Now if it so much exceeds our Understandings, how can we judge whether a Trinity implies a Contradiction, or no? Can we believe the Divine Nature Incomprehensible, and a Trinity in it Irrational? If we cannot comprehend it, we cannot fairly judge, whether the Notion of a Trinity be irrationally or no; for the Divine Excellency is to be measur'd by itself, and not our prying Imaginations; and for ought we know, a Trinity may be the greatest Excellency in it; our Conceptions cannot alter it. We may indeed, thereby misrepresent it; but that remains the same it was, and receives no more Discredit from the odd and foolish Representations of it, than a Man does from a Picture that is drawn of him; for as it does not follow, because the Picture is made for a Man, there should be the same indelible Lines upon his Face, that are mark'd out upon the Canvas; no more does it appear likely, that the Divine Essence should be the same, which the bold Fancies of presumptuous Wits have describ'd it to be. His Perfections are not lessen'd by the distorted Draught of our Imaginations; neither is he the less Admirable and Glorious, because some few that pretend to be singular in Reason, declare that a Trinity is inconsistent with him. No Men, how sharp-witted soever, must pretend they are able to say what is monstrous in the Deity; 'tis well if we could discreetly find that out in our selves: Our best Judgment, which we pass upon the Nature of Things, is taken from the constant Proceedings of the Laws of Nature, and verball that unnatural, which is not conformant or agreeable to that, which is usually done by her; but this is nothing to the Essence of God, who made those Laws, and cannot be measur'd by the most rigid Proceedings, or accomplished Parts of the Creation.

bo. II. The Excellency of the Divine Nature is perfectly known to it self only, according to its own Greatness; we may have some imperfect Apprehensions of it, according to those natural Impressions, the Great Creator has left upon us, or the Revelation that he has made concerning himself. But the infinitely self-originated Essence, is only understood by it self, and can never be entirely surveyed by any other, unless there can be found a Created Understanding, large and capacious enough to rival the Deity in Knowledge, i. e. unless the Creatures Mind can be the same with the Creator's, and comprehend as much as can be known by Divinity it self. But this can never be granted, for a Created Understanding, though never so much refin'd by Thought, and sublimated by Contemplation, is in it self confin'd and bounded, and can never by any

latent Power, extend it self so far as the Perfections of the Divine Essence reach; it remains ignorant of it self, and must remain ignorant of that which made it, and by its Eternal Excellency is placed above it; and nothing can comprehend that glorious Brightness, and describe the Essential Communications of it, but he himself, who is thoroughly acquainted with all the vast Perfections inherent in him; and though so much above us, can describe himself to us in that condescending Way that is agreeable to our Capacities, and fitted to our Infirmities; the most that we can receive in this mortal State, or which our present Faculties can admit. He can tell us in our own Language, the Reality of his Essence, and the Persons that communicate in it, and clothe the sublimest Mysteries, which Angels themselves admire, with proper Expressions, which we may safely use, and steadily build our Faith upon; for he knows our Make, and understands best what we can receive, and what Notions are most agreeable to his Greatness, and prepared for our Faith.

3. A Trinity of Persons can be no Diminution to the Excellency of the Divine Essence, though Men should fancy it to be so. For the Perfections of it are to be valued and measured by it self, and not by the different Sentiments of Mankind. And if it appears by Revelation, that it suffers no Diminution in its own Esteem, which it is communicated to Three Persons, it cannot be degraded or lessened by all the Absurdities, which conceited Men may draw up against it. For it remains the same it was from all Eternity, as glorious and wonderful, and will remain the same, notwithstanding any Objections that the little, creeping Thoughts of Men amuse themselves with. His Goodness is not diminished by being imparted, and the Excellency of his Nature is not obscured. His Power is as large, his Justice as exact, his Truth as fix'd, his Glory as bright, his Majesty as tremendous, as if he was but one, according to the *Socium* Trinity: His Essence being the same, and varying not, though Three enjoy it. "With him is no Variableness, nor Shadow of Turning."

That which hath occasioned so much Clamour against this Holy Mystery, is the Notion which the *Caldean* Catechism gives of a Person. For it is there defined an individual intelligent Essence; and it is from thence argued, that if there are Three Persons, there must be Three Essences. But if we take Person in a truer Sense, as denoting Father, Son, or Holy Ghost, partaking of one and the same Essence, there is no Danger of making Three Essences. We read of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and of their being but One God; This is enough for our Satisfaction, if we can understand what is designed thereby, and acknowledge the Father that sent the Son, the Son that is sent by the Father, and is God equal with him, the Holy Ghost, that is neither Father, nor Son, and yet declared to be God, with the Father, and the Son. And however strange this Trinity may seem to be to the narrow Minds of little Men, it may be the sublimest Excellency in God, if we can receive it with Modesty, and do not prejudice our selves with some dubious Terms

Artic. I. of Art, or some unhappy Imaginations of our own. For if it is thus in God, it will be so, whether we will admit of it or no; and all our Contention about the Notion of a Person cannot alter it, or diminish from the Glory of it. Our exactest and nicest Speculations cannot render the least created Being different from it self, or change the Composure of a Worm, or the meanest Fly; and our strongest Arguments, drawn up against the Majesty of the Trinity, can never produce the least Alteration in the Nature of it. We may contend mightily, and use a great many hard Words, and differ vastly about it; but that is the same from Everlasting to Everlasting.

4. No natural Idea of the Excellency of the Divine Nature, engraven upon Man's Heart, or formed by true Reasoning, can be fairly alledged against the Trinity. If any one adviseth with the genuine Dictates of Right Reason, and forms as natural an Idea of the Divinity as he can, he will conceive it to be the Perfection of Wisdom, Goodness, Power, and but One in it self, and no more: And yet this genuine Notion of it, does not in the least contradict the Notion of the Trinity, or represent it as incredible. For Nature does but direct us to the Essence of God, which for ought she knows, may be discovered by Revelation to be communicated unto Three. Nature would not possess us with these Apprehensions concerning God's Eternal Power and Godhead, if they were false; neither can a true Relation contradict what hath been discovered by Nature; they are both consistent and easily reconciled, there being no Contradiction, that God in his Essence should be One, according to the Dictates of Nature; and Three Persons in the Godhead, according to the Words of Revelation. He is One in Essence, as Nature and Reason truly observe: And there are Three that communicate in this Essence, as the Holy Spirit hath discovered; the First may be known by the Force of Consideration, the Last cannot be known but by Revelation. The First is plain and obvious from the Works of the Creation; the Last is mysterious, surprizing, and had never been known amongst Men, if God had not condescended to discover it.

Now because Reason and Revelation do thus agree, and mutually support the Representations they distinctly make concerning God, it is not ingenuous in any, to separate natural Knowledge from reveal'd, and to argue from the natural Notion of the Unity of the Godhead, against the Trinity of Persons. For where Reason fails in leading us forward, we may be glad to receive the Assistance of Revelation, in order to carry on our Thoughts farther into the Contemplations of the Divine Nature. Had God left us entirely to the Information of Reason, we must have been contented with natural Notions, and could have proceeded no farther; But affording us a Revelation, which plainly says, "There are Three in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and that these Three are One"; we are pre-engaged to understand him in his own Way, and may not summon up Natural Notions against the Discovery he hath made of himself. If Nature could have informed us as much, there was

no need of a Revelation; and now the Revelation is made, she may not pretend to contradict it; for as she dictates the Will of God in that which is plain, God may be allowed to speak for himself; and if she may be credited, when she speaks for God, he must be credited much more, when he describes himself. God would not deceive us by his Spirit, and be less accurate in his Words, than Nature is in her Dictates; nor would he say one Thing by Nature, and impress it upon every Man's Heart; and the contrary by Revelation, and command every one to believe it: Nor would he design to amuse Men with different Apprehensions, and teach Nature to oppose Revelation, or direct Revelation to clash with Nature. Either therefore those that separate Nature and Revelation, must think, that the one is more credible than the other, and that God contradicts himself; or that they do ill in arguing from the Notions of the one, against the Manifestations of the other. They are both consistent and very well reconciled; if busy Men can be contented; and are joined together by the Divine Will, to give that familiar Account of the Deity, which is judged most agreeable to our narrow Understandings, and suited to our low Capacities. It is not therefore inconsistent with the Excellency of the Divine Essence, to be common to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; for that surpasses our Understandings, and we are obliged to observe that Distance the Creator hath placed us in, and may not pry into that which is above our Apprehensions, and best known to God himself.

III. The Account which the Holy Scriptures give of this tremendous Mystery, does not in the least oppose the old Terms of the Catholick Church; as may appear from considering, That God can best discover to his own Creatures what he is: That whatever Discovery he makes, must be seemingly contradictory to Reason, and below the Dignity of his glorious Nature: That the Discovery he hath made, was designed for the meanest as well as the most improved Part of Mankind: And that the same Discovery is to be received with Humility and Modesty, and may not be expos'd by artificial Comments. The Consideration of these may confirm us in the Use of those Ways of Expression, that have been commonly used in the Church.

1. God can best discover to his Creatures what he is. He only knows the Perfections of himself, and is able to inform them of those vast and surprizing Excellencies, which otherwise, by Reason of their shallow Capacities, they must remain ignorant of, and unacquainted with. He can draw aside that Vail, which conceals the Glory of his Nature, and covers his most retired Greatness; and can in Words agreeable to our Apprehensions, and his own Majesty, offer himself to human View, and inform us what he is. If any Thing else could pry into the secret Recesses of his Essence, and give certain Intelligence concerning the transcendent Glory of it, we might attend unto it: But neither Men nor Angels can look beyond the Bounds, which confine their Understandings, or take the full Dimension of that which is infinite. The most improved Philosopher can only shadow

Article I. shadow out, by his clearest Arguments, what Reason suggests: And the brightest Angel can but acquaint us with that sublime Measure of Discovery he is admitted to enjoy. But the Great God is not confin'd in his Knowledge, and can set forth the Perfections of his Nature, according to their own real Greatness and Glory: As his Understanding is perfect, the Discovery he makes must be agreeable, not depending upon a Guess, as the Report which Reason makes, nor yet upon a transient View, as Spirits may inform themselves; but upon one immediate Consideration of all his Perfections by one pure Act: and therefore must be as agreeable to himself, and as proper for us to receive, as can be imagined, unless we can suspect his Veracity, and pretend that he will not describe himself to Man as he is in himself: and according to that Measure of Reason, we are entrusted with. But as his Essential Goodness will not permit him to lie, his vast Understanding will not allow him to mistake, and the Discovery that he makes of himself, must be the most perfect Description that we can possibly receive in this mortal State.

2. Whatever Discovery he condescends to make of himself, must appear seemingly contradictory to Reason, and in our Apprehensions below the Dignity of his most Glorious Nature: And that because it must be fitted to the Narrowness of our Capacities, and render'd somewhat intelligible to us. Should he tell us what he is in Perfection, according to the immediate Views he takes of himself, we ought to have a perfect Understanding to comprehend it, and an infinite Mind to fathom it. We could not tell the vast Extents of his Power, unless we could, at one Glance, as he does, behold the utmost Dimensions of it: nor could we strictly consider the Wonderfulness of his Omnipresence, unless we could extend our Thoughts as far, and be every where present with him: Nor could we comprehend his Eternity, and see at once the Perfection of his Life in it self, unless we could in a Moment look through Myriads of Durations, and conceive them as always present; nor could we exactly search into his Essence, by which he is, and set forth the true Dimensions of it, unless we could think as he does, and grasp at one Thought that which is infinite: Nay, should he condescend to tell us in an adequate Manner what he is, and deliver his Mind in Words agreeable to his Greatness, we are no more able to receive the Account, than St. Paul was to pronounce unutterable Words. For our little Souls are not able to contain the Divinity, as they are limited; and it is impossible they should be capable of receiving such a Glorious Description. He hath therefore in Wisdom considered the weak Understandings of his Creatures, and the Narrowness of their Thoughts, and suited his Words admirably to their Apprehensions, giving them that Description of himself according to the Reality of his Nature, which is fit for them to receive, or which indeed they can receive. He hath discovered as much of himself, as our limited Capacities can bear; and does seem to speak Contradictions, because he speaks of Things above the Understanding of Man in his own Language, and brings down the Knowledge of that to our Apprehensions,

ons, which was, and is, and will be of a different Nature from all those created Beings, our Minds are accustomed to, and do usually make their Judgment by : He tells us but Part, because it is impossible for us to comprehend the whole ; and we can but know in Part as yet, till our Capacities are enlarged and enabled to know more ; and the Part which we know, seems to be so strong in it self, and so different from other Notions we have picked up from created Beings, that the Lofly in Thought imagine they hear of Contradictions. But thus it must be, whilst he is the Great and Living God, and we but poor, and weak Creatures, limited and streighten'd in our Understandings. If he will reveal what he is, he must describe himself, though in Part, in a true Manner, for he cannot lie ; and he does not think fit to enlarge our Capacities to understand more than he hath given us leave to understand : And if he says, there are Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, it may be so for ought we know, or can know ; and as strange as the Account may seem to be to aspiring Minds, it must be proper for us to receive, because revealed by him who knows best, and can deliver such mysterious Truths in Words agreeable to our Capacities.

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3. The Discovery that he hath made was designed for the Meanest, as well as the most Improved Part of Mankind. He did never intend to be understood only by the great Wits and Rabbies of the Age, but kindly considered the several Measures of Understanding he had imparted to Men, and accommodated his Words to the Capacities of all, that the lowest of the People, as well as those of more quick and refined Judgments, might learn what he was, and pay their Adorations before him. This is manifest in all the Messages he sent by the Prophets, but especially in the last Revelation he hath made of himself by his Son Jesus ; for neither they nor he did confine their Discourse to the polite and most learned Part of the *Jews*, but spake to the People in general, to the Multitude as well as the Learned ; and left to every one to consider and judge for himself. Our Lord Jesus spake frequently to the Multitude, and look'd upon the common People, as competent enough to understand and receive his Doctrine. His Apostles after him spake to all promiscuously, and look'd upon the Vulgar, as well as the improved Part of Men, as able enough to consider and understand what they meant. They directed their Epistles to whole Churches, that were made up of all Sorts, and left it to every one to consider and believe aright. This being undoubtedly true, we may be certain, it was God's Design to be understood according as the meanest might understand him ; and that the Description that he had given of himself, should be taken according to the most obvious and plain Meaning of his Words, and as a sincere and honest Man would take them ; any one would think, that there are Three intelligent Persons in the Deity ; they are so particularly described, and so frequently mentioned, that it is almost impossible for any unprejudiced Mind to consider what is written, and not believe, or at least suspect, they are or may be Three.

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The Commission which authorized the Apostles to teach all Nations, and to baptize those that believed, might tempt any illiterate but honest Mind to believe in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The Declaration which St. *John* here makes concerning it, is so clear, pregnant, and undeniable, that not One in a Thousand, that reads his Epistle, but would conclude, that as there are Three in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, they are Three Persons, and as they are said to be One, that they are but One God. What plain Man that reads the first Chapter of St. *John's* Gospel without Prejudice, can deny, That the Word is God, or made the World, and was from all Eternity with God? Or who that reads the last Verse but one of his First Epistle, and considers how he cautions against Idolatry, can entertain any Scruple concerning the Divinity of Jesus, "We are in him that is true, even his Son Jesus Christ; this is the True God and Eternal Life"? Who also that considers the Promise of the Holy Ghost given by our Saviour, and reads how signally it was performed upon the Day of Pentecost; how St. *Peter* tells *Ananias*, that he lied unto the Holy Ghost, and had not lied unto Men, but unto God; could entertain any Scruple whether he was God or no? I deny not but Men of Boldness and Wit may study and find out strange Evasions; but what plain Vulgar Man, that is truly sincere and upright, would Judge otherwise? I cannot suspect, that the God of all Truth, who hath revealed thus much, that all Men might know him, would necessitate ordinary Persons, if he were not so of himself, to conceive of him in this Manner. For however apt some may be to impose upon the ignorant; the Purity and Goodness of God is so great, that it will not allow him to misguide the least reasonable Creature in the World: But if they are left to their own Understandings, to consider what he hath said of himself, they are necessitated to mistake, unless he is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in One Essence.

4. Whatever he has reveal'd concerning himself, is to be receiv'd with Humility and Modesty, and may not be expos'd or distorted by Artificial Comments; as it was design'd for the Vulgar, as well as Learned, it may not be wrack'd and stretch'd according to our own prepossessed Fancies, to serve a Cause; but ought to be taken as it is, according to the known, and usual Sense of the Words, least we should force the Scripture to speak what the Spirit never intended, or induce the Illiterate to take that for their Creed, which was never recommended to their Faith. Experience has proved this to be too fatal to Christendom; for the Wire-drawing of Scripture has been the Occasion of those many Sects and Schisms, that prevail in it. One Text or Two, that seems to favour obliquely a particular Fancy, has been so dexterously mariag'd by the ingenious Patrons of it, that they have gotten to themselves a Name by the Pious Fraud, and engaged an unhappy Multitude to embrace the Mistake. I need not Instance, to enflame those that are already too zealous; our own Nation has been too much concern'd in the Experiment: At present the Zealots against the adored Trinity, have shown what Wit, Learning,

ing, and Boldness can do, in misrepresenting the plain Word of Article II. God; their Evasions are peculiar to themselves, and apply'd in like Manner to other Texts, might make void the History of the whole Creation, and the most Momentous Articles of our Faith. When we tell them of the Glory which Jesus had with the Father, before the World was, they very ingeniously tell us, that the Meaning is before the Gospel was published: But what illiterate Man would so much as dream, that by the World we are to understand the Gospel? When we say, as St. John has taught us, That "in the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God; that all Things were made by him, and that without him, not any Thing was made, that was made"; they very wittily tell us, that by the Beginning, we are to understand the Beginning of the Gospel, that by all Things made, are to be understood the Ministration of the Gospel, and the setting up a Christian Church: But what plain Hearted Man, that understands common Sense, would put such an Interpretation upon those Words? Or who that reads, "Unto the Son, he saith, thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever; thou, Lord, in the Beginning hast laid the Foundation of the Earth, the Heavens are the Works of thy Hands"; wou'd so much as imagine, that the Son did not create Heaven and Earth? But what will not Craftiness invent to serve a Cause?

That we may decline this Inconvenience, we ought to read the Scriptures without Prejudice, and to take the Sense, as it lies clear and plain, and should not study Evasions, when we are surrounded with Conviction. Without doubt the Holy Spirit knew as well how to speak plain, and Dictate that which is Intelligible, as the most improv'd Adversary, and never stood in Need of their Direction, to draw up a Period, in Words suitable for Mankind to receive; nor yet to explain it when deliver'd. We therefore without Danger, take the Sense, as it lies to a vulgar Eye, without calling in the sagacious Assistance of a prepossessed Fancy, which would be wiser than Revelation, and teach God what to say; and how to describe himself: That which is necessary to Salvation, he has plainly reveal'd; and what is fit to be known of himself, is familiarly, and with great Condescension on his Part represented: And as much as it is, or has been expos'd, will be receiv'd with Humility and Reverence, by all modest, sober, and pious Men, who can trust to the Word of God, receive with Meekness his own Description of himself, and commit their Souls to his Keeping.

Thus, if we calmly consider, how able God is to inform us what he is, and what a plain Information he has given of Three Persons in One-Essence; we may freely and safely entertain, and acquiesce in the Belief of the most tremendous Trinity, as very agreeable to the reveal'd Will of God.

And now, according as I said at first, I think it very clear, that the Holy Trinity, and the ways of Expression commonly used in the Church, contain'd in the Three Creeds, and Thirty Nine Articles, are not contrary to right Reason modestly consider'd, to the Excellency of the Divine Nature, nor yet to Revelation it self; but may

Article I. may be piously adher'd to, as most consistent with the Will of God: And as for those new Terms invented by witty Men, who love to be singular, that they may appear the more eminent, they are liable to many just Exceptions, far greater, and more dangerous; for if the Holy Jesus is but a Man, then it is possible for a Man to be Omniscient, Omnipresent, Omnipotent, and to manage Divinity with a Thought, to receive also Divine Honour, and true Adoration; and if the Holy Spirit is but a Divine Energy, Power, Virtue, or Operation, then a created Power may be honour'd, as uncreated, and the Operation pass for God himself. But this is no Time to recriminate; this may suffice to satisfy us, that the Royal Directions for preserving the Unity of the Church, and the Purity of Christian Faith, are proper for the Archbishops and Bishops to insist upon, and recommend to our particular Observation and Care; that all of us, through their Advice and Encouragement, may keep strictly "to the Faith once deliver'd to the Saints", and stand upon the Defence against all Innovations whatsoever.

Now to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, Three Persons, and One Eternal God, be given all Honour, Praise and Adoration, by Men and Angels, now and for ever. Amen.



F I N I S